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ABSTRACT

The Oral Communication Competencies Assessment Project was designed to determine student communication competency across the curriculum, transferring skills taught in the communication skills class to authentic classroom performances. The 505 students who were required to make oral presentations across the curriculum during the first term of the 1995-96 academic year were assessed by 17 Johnson & Wales University faculty members. Faculty used the Oral Communication Mastery Document and Rubrics that were designed to be used by faculty from any discipline, novice or expert in assessment. It was expected and confirmed, in each of three presentations, that students demonstrate oral communication competency at an "adequate level," as defined by the rubrics' absolute standard of 3 on a 1-5 scale of performance. In fact, holistic and atomistic ratings found that, in most cases, scores significantly exceeded these expectations. There was no significant difference across academic years. (Appendixes include a 36-item bibliography, the student demographic survey, and instruction memos.) (YLB)

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Assessment of Oral Communication Competencies At Johnson & Wales University A Pilot Program Assessing Culinary Arts And Pastry Arts Students

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ASSESSMENT OF ORAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCIES AT JOHNSON & WALES UNIVERSITY A PILOT PROGRAM ASSESSING CULINARY ARTS AND PASTRY ARTS STUDENTS

By

Joanne Marciano Crossman

A Field Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the

Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study

in

The Department of Educational Studies, Foundations & Technology

School of Graduate Studies

Rhode Island College

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ABSTRACT

As we approach the new millennium, it is critical that institutions of higher education systematically assess the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Recognizing and embracing that challenge, Johnson & Wales University continues its comprehensive assessment initiative at the course, program, school/college, and university levels. A world leader in Career Education and the Culinary Arts, the University also integrates a comprehensive General Education curriculum within each program of study. Traditionally, students attending "career education" institutions demand authentic application and integration of skills, knowledge, and abilities. In this respect, the Oral Communication Competencies Assessment Project was ideal. Its goal was to determine student communication competency across the curriculum; transferring skills taught in the Communication Skills class to authentic classroom performances.

Most valued by society as a foundation skill for college graduates and competent workers, communication prowess is extraordinarily complex to assess. This is exacerbated by the notion that if we can speak, effective communication follows. It is essential then, to identify competencies inherent to effective oral communication, and descriptions of performance levels. The Oral Communication Mastery Document and Rubrics were designed to be used by faculty from any discipline, novice or expert in assessment. In fact, the instruments employed in this study were welcomed by faculty, lauded for their clarity and conciseness, and rendered solid intercoder reliability.

The 505 students who were required to make oral presentations across the curriculum during the first term of the 1995-96 academic year, were assessed by 17 Johnson & Wales University faculty members. It was expected and confirmed, in each of three presentations, that students demonstrate oral communication competency at an "adequate level," as defined by the Rubrics' absolute standard of "3" on a 1-5 scale of

performance. In fact, holistic and atomistic ratings found that in most cases, scores significantly exceeded these expectations. There was no significance across academic years.

Since it is likely that numerous factors may influence communication skills (peers, teachers, family, environment, self image, past experiences, etc.), it is difficult to credit one particular course or program as the sole teacher of communication skills. It was not the intention of this study to do so. Rather, the process of developing communication prowess is believed to be cumulative; skills learned and practiced in the Communication Skills course are transferred to a variety of authentic circumstances and ultimately mastered over time.

Dedication

This project is dedicated to my family, in gratitude for their unconditional love and support.

I thank my parents for teaching me to strive, rather than to settle. Their high ideals taught me not to compromise my integrity. "Do your best," they often said, "even when everyone else is doing their worst. Then you can be proud." I also thank my sister, Debbie, for cheering me on and cheering me up; but mostly for loving me for a lifetime.

I thank my husband, Ward, for his infinite patience and strength. After so many years, we instinctually know when to offer advice, when to simply listen, and when to allow for solitude.

Finally, I thank my beautiful daughters, Lisa and Jenna, for showing me the world through their eyes, when mine are blurred by distractions. Despite all that I have learned academically, the greatest lesson of my life was to discover and nurture the love between mother and child. I hope I can be a positive role model for them, and I offer the wisdom of George Bernard Shaw: "Life is not meant to be easy, my child; but take courage; it can be delightful."

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The completion of this project is the result of the dedication and professionalism of many fine people. I wish to thank Dr. Nancy Sullivan, for encouraging me to enter into the C.A.G.S. program, for being my advisor, and for directing this project. She is an inspiring role model. I believe that her endorsement of my work assures its quality.

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I thank Thomas Farrell, Dean of the John Hazen White School of Arts & Sciences, Paul McVety, Assistant Dean of the College of Culinary Arts, the Arts & Sciences Outcomes Assessment Committee, and the faculty evaluators who participated in this project: Mary Barszcz, Ilene Cassola, Gail Doyle, Paula Figoni, Nancy Garnett-Thomas, Nelson Guertin, Michael Marra, Deb Marshall-Ridolfi, David Newman, Tom Pandolfini, Sam Postbrief, Jim Prest, Chris Thompson, Silvin Vaicaitis, Suzanne Vieira, and Paula Zuege.

Finally, I thank the Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts students who participated in this study. I wish them continued success in their academic and professional careers.

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CHAPTER ONE
THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

INTRODUCTION

Prompted by Congress' adoption of *Goals 2000*, the United States Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), published *A Plan for Validating Criteria and Measures to Monitor Progress Toward National Education Goal 5.5: Identifying College Graduates' Essential Skills in Writing, Speech and Listening, and Critical Thinking*. As cited in Berko (1995) the report emphasizes:

> The need for college graduates to communicate effectively is very important in our society where the daily operations and success of business organizations are contingent upon managing, making decisions, documenting and reporting large amounts of complex information. In nearly every study that has investigated the qualities employers most desire in their employees, good communication skills, both verbal and written, rank among the top priorities.

Prior to the OERI report, the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) developed *Learning A Living: A Blueprint for High Performance, A SCANS Report for America 2000*. Within this report, "speaking" was defined as a foundation skill required of competent workers in the high performance workplace (1992 p.6). Having good speaking skills, however, is a paradoxical concept. While effective oral communication skills are always listed among the most essential of life skills, they are often dismissed as something anyone can do. Further, these skills are deemed either too difficult to assess, or so basic, that they need not be assessed. The underlying assumption is, if we can speak we can communicate effectively; can we not?

Proceeding on the assumption that oral communication is in fact an essential skill for a well educated college graduate, the task remains of proving that the graduate does demonstrate communication prowess.

"For a time...so long as each public institution assessed its students' learning, and thereby showed its care for undergraduate improvement, the charge (assessment) would be met," Ewell (1991, p. 12). However, public demands for accountability now are represented by a broadened constituency at the national, state, and institutional level, comprised of business and industry, parents and non-parents, as well as students. Among the greatest accountability questions is "What does the graduate know and how can you prove it?" Those institutions which have engaged in assessment discovered that meaningful assessment is a labor intensive, long-term investment. Further, these institutions discovered that a strong constituency of faculty is necessary to establish *authentic assessment,* absolute standards, and procedures. A fundamental question that compels all of these constituencies is: "Is the assessment process intended simply to provide broad public benchmarks, or should it be capable of informing future action?" and can it do both? (1991 p. 16)

This project is designed to address this question in terms of assessing the **oral communication competencies** of Johnson & Wales University Culinary and Pastry Arts students, and is based on the premise that assessment strategies must be not only authentic and formative, but also be a benchmark that informs future action. That is, the assessment initiative has as its primary goal evaluation and refinement of instruction and learning. As noted earlier, assessment of oral communication competencies continues to be a difficult process; primarily because there is no uniform set of criteria for the discipline. The Speech Communication Association therefore developed nine principles as a guide for communications assessment Hay (1992):

1) Assessment should be based on goals/objectives defined and operationalized by the faculty of specific programs within the context of a particular department.

2) Program assessment is an ongoing process conducted for the purpose of program improvement and student learning within a particular institution.

3) Assessment needs to provide data relevant to student knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

4) Assessment should recognize the competing demands of constituencies involved: graduate schools, employers, internship supervisors, professional associations, other departments served by communication courses, and students.

5) Assessment should be based on multiple methods appropriate to a given program rather than any single test.

6) Assessment instruments and procedures should be externally validated.

7) Assessment data collection, interpretation, and storage should be the province of the faculty in the department.

8) Program assessment is the responsibility of every faculty member.

9) The learning environment is enhanced by the inter-relationship among the department's instruction, research, creative activities, and service goals. Therefore, a program's collective contribution to its multiple constituencies, through research, creative activities, and service, should ultimately be part of program assessment.

This study uses a holistic design which evaluates each student's performance as a unit. Atomistic ratings of the parts (traits) of the performances are equally weighted to determine the holistic score. While there is no universal set of criteria on which to base assessment of oral communication skills, valid and reliable instruments must address the age-old constraints of content and delivery. In *Assessing Speaking and Listening: Preliminary Consideration for National Assessment*, Daly supports seven criteria for the demonstration of oral communication mastery:

1) Situational appropriateness
2) Involvement and responsiveness
3) Adaptability and flexibility
4) Clarity
5) Efficiency
6) Goal accomplishment
7) Politeness

Aitken and Neer identify a more inclusive set of competencies in *A Faculty Program of Assessment for a College Level Competency-Based Communication Core Curriculum*. These are:

1) Audience adaptability 2) Organizational ability
3) Message preparation 4) Message presentation

The Johnson & Wales University Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics, now adopted by the John Hazen White School of Arts & Sciences (primarily responsible for teaching communication skills across the undergraduate curriculum), defines five competencies. (See Table Number 1 Page 5: *Comparison of Criteria)*

1) Concern for audience
2) Organization/Structure
3) Substance
4) Voice/Articulation/Language
5) Delivery/Non Verbals

The assessment rubrics developed and used by Johnson & Wales University rate each of these skills as **excellent; impressive; adequate; developing or rudimentary**. The assessment is formative in nature, in that the atomistic and holistic scores will be reported in writing to the Dean, Assistant Dean, Department Chairpersons, faculty and students at Johnson & Wales University.

TABLE 1: COMPARISON OF CRITERIA

DALY	AITKEN & NEER	JOHNSON & WALES UNIVERSITY
1) Situational appropriateness	1) Audience adaptability	1) Concern for audience
2) Involvement & responsiveness	2) Organizational adaptability	2) Organization/ Structure
3) Adaptability & flexibility	3) Message preparation	3) Substance
4) Clarity	4) Message presentation	4) Voice/Articulation/ Language
5) Efficiency		5) Delivery/ Non Verbals
6) Goal accomplishment		
7) Politeness		

This study is a pilot assessment design and implementation of a program for assessment of oral communication skills which can be replicated within the University's various schools and colleges and in its various branch campuses. It is significant not only for Johnson & Wales University, but for other colleges and universities with similar programs. Findings will be used to facilitate discussions among constituencies; particularly as the data suggests areas of strengths and weaknesses in terms of performance and communicating the criteria of excellence to students. Further, the data and plans for curricular improvement will also be shared with accreditation associations as a means to demonstrate the University's commitment to Outcomes Assessment, university accountability issues, instruction, and student learning. Finally, it has import in terms of program articulation and linkage between and among courses.

RESEARCH QUESTION

As demonstrated through the delivery of oral presentations in Arts & Sciences and Culinary Arts Academic courses which require oral presentations, do Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts Sophomore, Junior and Senior students and Pastry Arts Sophomores demonstrate oral communication competencies at an adequate* level?

NULL HYPOTHESIS

As demonstrated through the delivery of oral presentations in Arts & Sciences and Culinary Arts Academic courses which require oral presentations, Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts Sophomore, Junior, and Senior students and Pastry Arts Sophomores do not demonstrate oral communication competencies at an adequate* level.

**** (As defined by the Johnson & Wales University Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics, "adequate" is the level of performance which scores "3" on a 1-5 scale. See Pages 47-51)***

SUBSIDIARY QUESTIONS

1) Do Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts Sophomores,* and Culinary Arts Juniors and Seniors demonstrate oral communication competencies at increasing proficiency in concurrent and/or subsequent course work across academic rank?
*(concurrently studying Communication Skills)

2) Is there a significant difference between the Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts Freshmen baseline competency level (prior to studying Communication Skills at the University), and the competency levels observed in subsequent course work across academic rank?

3) Is there a significant difference between the Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts Sophomore baseline competency level demonstrated in the Communication Skills course, (EN1030) and the Sophomore competency level demonstrated in concurrent and/or subsequent Arts & Sciences courses and in Culinary Arts academic courses?

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was limited in terms of population; 439 students were Culinary Arts majors and 56 were Pastry Arts majors. These "day school" undergraduates included seemingly few Juniors (61) and Seniors (32). However, only 67 Juniors and 36 Seniors were enrolled in Academic Studies when the study was conducted because the Bachelor's Program (C4) is only two years old. Further, the generalizability of the results is limited to Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts students. Finally, the study is limited to similar institutions with comparable performance outcome expectations in Communication Skills across the curriculum.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Absolute Standards: Student performance is based on criterion of adequate standards. For this study, a score of "3" on a 5 point scale is adequate and is considered the absolute standard for oral communication competencies.

Alternative Assessment or Authentic Assessment: Historically, norm referenced, multiple choice tests have been used for student assessment. These types of tests however, do not address the processes of learning nor true-to-life applications of knowledge and skills. Authentic assessment, on the other hand, requires students to produce, perform or create something, and invokes higher level/critical thinking. For this study, authentic assessment of oral communication competencies reviews student performance across the curriculum, in an educational setting.

Assessment: The root of the word assessment means *to sit with.* Assessment of student learning is a process of gathering and providing meaningful feedback for the purpose of improving teaching and learning. Assessment should be authentic, faculty driven, and supported by administration. The findings of assessment activities should be shared with the institution's various constituencies. In this study, assessment is performed by faculty, using the Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics.

Atomistic Scoring: While the Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics measure competencies holistically to determine mean scores, atomistic rating of each individual competency is also employed. This process suggests specific competency mastery and directs curricular refinement as necessary.

Communication: Communication is a dynamic process of the interchange of meanings. While theorists differ in their explanations of how the vital components of communication interact, many agree that communication includes a source, message, channel, receiver, filtering system, feedback, and various distractions. Depending on the communication encounter, communicators perform several different functions. Oral communication is far more complicated than just the act of speaking. Since there are various meanings for messages, and communicators use unique filtering systems to focus on and/or neglect certain aspects of messages, events or people, messages are often misconstrued. It is therefore crucial to solicit and provide meaningful feedback and to limit communication distractions.

Communications Competence: The graduate should be able to read, write, speak and listen effectively and be able to express and process ideas clearly and succinctly. Communication through reading, writing, speaking and listening is essential to professional

and personal growth (John Hazen White School of Arts & Sciences Faculty Manual 1994-95). The speaking competencies are measured with the Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics.

Competencies/Mastery Levels of Performance for Oral Communication at Johnson & Wales University: Mastery of oral communication is demonstrated through mastery of the following competencies: **Concern for audience; Organization/ Structure; Substance; Voice/Articulation/Language; Delivery/Non Verbals.** The standards are: **5= Excellent, 4= Impressive, 3= Adequate, 2= Developing and 1= Rudimentary**. The Oral Communication Mastery Document describes in detail each competency and standard. The Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics are an abbreviated version of the Mastery Document and are the instrument used by faculty to assess classroom performances. The instruments employ holistic scoring in conjunction with atomistic methods.

Formative evaluation: Assessment should be a learning experience whereby faculty and students develop together. This is achieved through faculty driven assessment initiatives which provide continual feedback on academic performance to students and other constituencies.

Generalize: Students who demonstrate communication prowess may transfer (generalize) skills from the Communication Skills course (EN1030) to performances across the curriculum.

Intercoder Reliability: In order to assure internal reliability, the faculty were trained to use the Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics through practice and discussion. After studying the Oral Communication Mastery Document, and the rubrics, each faculty member

viewed and scored two video taped student presentations with the rubrics. (The speakers were not Johnson & Wales University students). Prior to and after this process, the faculty met with the researcher to discuss the process. This study computed intercoder reliability using Coefficient Alpha, which applies to reliability of scales where more than two responses are possible, and rendered .72 reliability for the first training video tape and .89 reliability for the second training video tape.

Mastery: Mastery is demonstrated by performing a desired behavior to a specified standard. In this study, mastery is demonstrated at no less than a "3," (adequate) on the Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics.

Program of Studies: The set of organized educational experiences offered to Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts students over a multiyear period includes several fields of study. This study refers to the Culinary Arts, Pastry Arts, and General Education programs.

Rubrics: Centuries ago, red earth was used to delineate something important. Today, this Latin term refers to scoring instruments which employ a rating scale and a list of characteristics describing performances for each level on the scale. The Johnson & Wales University Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics are the evaluative tool used to assess oral communication prowess across the curriculum.

Sophomore Slump: This phrase coined by Freedman (1956) as cited in Rubin et al. (1990), indicates that the Sophomore year of college is historically associated with academic and social identity crises which cause decreased competency scores. The assessment data for the Sophomore population in this study were analyzed to test the Sophomore Slump Theory.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This project is based on the *Systems Theory* as it relates to institutions of learning and students, *The Five Dimensions of Learning*, and *authentic* or *alternative assessment* as the catalysts for curricular refinement.

Hanna and Wilson (1991) define Systems Theory, as it might relate to an organization (or to an institution of learning) as taking in resources in the form of people, and information; processing these inputs (students) to yield products or services. The mission statement of Johnson & Wales University contends that the output be educated people equipped with conceptual and practical tools required to become contributing members of society and to achieve success in employment fields with high growth potential. Hanna and Wilson continue: the organization monitors the effects of its outputs (outcomes assessment) in relation to goals and produces feedback about its performance (analyzing and reporting outcomes findings). The interdependent parts of the system work together (students, faculty, administration) to transform the resources (students) into a product (marketable, educated employee). The system's (university's) output, in terms of this study, is student communication competency, which should be viewed as being the result of interaction and interdependence with the other component parts (courses and programs of study). These outputs (generalized, transferable communication skills) combine to produce a greater result than that of each part working independently (p. 28). System Theory is **only** referred to in this context in this project. That is, the Systems approach for the purpose of this project, is based on behavioral learning theory which characterizes learning as the accumulation of separate, discrete skills. It is understood that learning theory has shifted towards cognitive psychology where "learners construct their own knowledge and develop their own cognitive maps of the interconnections among facts and concepts" (Shepard in Marzano et al., 1993 p. 11).

This learning theory reflects a holistic view of learning and what has come to be referenced as "Systems Theory." Marzano et al. (1993) contend in the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development's (ASCD) *Dimensions of Learning* that learning theory "is an instructional framework based on the best of what research and theory say about learning. Its premise is that five types of thinking...are essential to successful learning." (p.1) The Dimensions of Learning are: 1) Positive attitudes and perceptions about learning 2) Acquiring and Integrating knowledge 3) Extending and refining knowledge 4) Using knowledge meaningfully 5) Productive habits of mind. In other words, students reconstruct knowledge as a result of being part of the system of learning (p.2-3).

It is this framework which shapes the basis of the Johnson & Wales University Oral Communication Competencies Assessment Pilot Program. As we evaluate oral communication competencies, we are actually evaluating a process of learning. The Dimensions of Learning operate collectively as does teaching, learning, applying and mastering communication prowess.

Proceeding on the premise that learning is holistic, The National Commission on Testing and Public Policy contends that assessment, too, should be holistic and authentic. Authentic assessment is formative and should mirror the way learning is actually applied. Assessment initiatives driven by formative philosophy will evaluate with the purpose of improving instruction and learning, which we now know are "closely and intimately tied" (Marzano et al., 1993 p. 11. *In A Nation At Risk*, Walter Doyle reported that students in American schools

> ...choose to ignore the things on which they are not tested. And teachers tend to consciously or unconsciously focus their instruction on the learnings that are prescribed and tested by the school, district or state (pp. 11-12).

Authentic assessment was created to re-define and refine student learning. On March 24, 1995, at the *Case Study 2: Integrating Curriculum, Teaching, and Assessment Conference* in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, Dr. D.W. Farmer, Vice President of Academic Affairs, at King's College described his institution's nationally recognized assessment program:

> Use assessment to re-define and refine student learning and ask:
>
> 1) How does college education cumulatively contribute to learning?
>
> 2) Are students learning what faculty are teaching?
>
> 3) What do we want our students to know? Do we tell them? Do we write it down in clear, precise language?
>
> 4) How can the quality and quantity of student learning be improved?
>
> 5) What can faculty and students do to improve?
>
> 6) How will we use what we learn through assessment?
>
> Assessment is a form of internal accountability among faculty, students and administration. Use it to improve teaching and learning. Allow it to foster relationships among colleagues, and with faculty and students. Support it as a means of empowering students to take responsibility for their learning.

This project carefully and systematically examined assessment frameworks and used these to develop the rubrics and procedures of this study. These frameworks are noted in the review of the literature in Chapter Two.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

As an outcome of the initial pilot of the rubrics, the University now advocates the inclusion of the Oral Communication Mastery Document (see pp. 47-50) on all undergraduate syllabi for courses requiring oral presentations, and has made available to faculty the Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics (see p. 51). These actions speak to developing outcomes based in learning theory and argues for making criteria for excellence clear and concise, performance based, and communicating such in writing. The University's General Education Committee endorsed the Mastery Document and Rubrics, as did the John Hazen White of School of Arts & Sciences. As Chair of the University Outcomes Assessment Committee and primary author of the Mastery Document and Rubrics, this researcher forwarded said documents to all branch campuses as an aid to establishing and evaluating performance based standards of excellence in oral communication performance.

Further, as an outcome of the initial pilot of the rubrics, for outcome assessment in oral communication, all course syllabi are now required to include the following outcomes assessment statement:

Johnson & Wales University is committed to its Outcome Assessment initiative. All faculty and students are therefore part of an on-going study to determine and refine the effectiveness of instruction and learning. Names of individual students will not be used when reporting results.

As reported later in this study, as of the 1996-97 academic year, the University will include the outcomes assessment statement (above) in the yearly catalogues for all campuses, the graduate school and the student handbook. The outcomes statement makes clear to our students, faculty and various constituencies that we are in fact committed to this initiative. Our accrediting bodies will no doubt take note of our efforts as well.

CHAPTER TWO
REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE AND RESEARCH: WHY TEACH ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS?

As we approach the new millennium, vocational, technical, business and industry leaders will continue to demand specialized job skills, as well as traditionally valued psychomotor ability of their employees. However, the evidence presently indicates that training for service industries must also incorporate the teaching and assessment of cognitive and affective skills. Institutions of higher learning must therefore develop and assess comprehensive programs which are focused, functional and responsive to societal needs Pucel (1989). In essence, educators are striving to interrelate subject specific knowledge, skills, and abilities within the learning domains, with general education aimed at life long learning.

As an international leader in career education, Johnson & Wales University successfully integrates general education, professional skills and career-focused education. Throughout its undergraduate curriculum, and consistent with its mission, the University strives to develop and assess sound programs and curricula that allow students to attain proficiencies in general education and professional disciplines (Johnson & Wales, 1994).

Among the most crucial of all skills is communication prowess. This is supported by a recent U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) publication titled: *A Plan for Validating Criteria and Measures to Monitor Progress Toward National Education Goal 5.5* (Identifying College Graduates' Essential Skills in Writing, Speech and Listening, and Critical Thinking). Goal 5 states, "By the year 2000, every American adult will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of

citizenship." More than one fourth of young adults complete four years of college and almost half complete two years. During that time, it is essential that students receive training in communication; noted in the OERI report as generic to a wide range of higher education disciplines and occupations (Berko, 1995 p. 8).

The OERI report states:

> The need for college graduates to communicate effectively is very important in our society where the daily operations and success of business organizations are contingent upon managing, making decisions, documenting and reporting large amounts of complex information. In nearly every study that has investigated the qualities employers most desire in their employees, good communication skills, both verbal and written, rank high among the top priorities. The report was a formal investigation into the skills that faculty, employers and policy makers believe are critical for college graduates. The section entitled 'Speech Communication Framework' was drawn from framework adopted and endorsed by the Speech Communication Association" (p. 8).

The Johnson & Wales Oral Assessment Program reflects and refines some of the skills identified in the Department of Education's study as critical for college graduates to attain. These include:

Basic Communication Skills

1) Accept responsibility for their own communication behavior
2) Be aware of language indicating bias on gender, age, ethnic, or sexual/affectional orientation

Message Development and Organization

1) Accomplish their communication goals
2) Select the most appropriate and effective medium for communicating
3) Select topics and messages about which they are comfortable and knowledgeable to speak

4) Identify their communication goals

5) Develop and present an interesting and attention-getting introduction in a speech

Contextual and Situational Analysis

1) Adapt to changes in audience characteristics

2) Choose and broaden a topic according to the needs of the audience

3) Choose and narrow a topic as appropriate according to the occasion

4) Prepare a message and adapt or make changes to the physical setting

5) Prepare a message and adapt communication style to the context and situation in which the oral communication occurs

Message Support

1) Use motivational appeals that build on values, expectations, and needs of the audience

2) Research effectively information required for message preparation

3) Support arguments with relevant and adequate evidence

4) Provide appropriate supporting material based on audience, occasion, and purpose

5) Support message by incorporating statements of others into their own statements

Information Exchange

1) Respond appropriately to feedback Communication Codes

2) Use appropriate nonverbal behaviors for the message and the audience

3) Recognize nonverbal behaviors and respond appropriately (Jones, 1994).

HOW DID WE GET HERE? A HISTORICAL VIEW OF ASSESSMENT:

Popham (1988) provides a historical view of evaluation dating to more than 4000 years ago, when it was common practice in China to assess key officials every three years to assess their fitness for office. In the 1930's, Ralph W. Tyler conducted *The Eight Year Study*, which argued that a program should be judged positively as directly correlated with student's mastery of behavioral objectives determined prior to the program's inception. This

goal-based conception of evaluation has influenced educational evaluation for decades. Tyler believed that curriculum makers must design and test learning experiences which correlate with the institution's philosophy of education and beliefs about the psychology of learning. He has been criticized, however, for contending that the selection of objectives be prerequisite to curriculum development. Yet Tyler is credited today for expanding the concept of evaluation. He saw merit in using a variety of evaluation methods including written examinations, and observations of pupils, projects, and participation. Curriculum theory made few advances by 1963, when Lee J. Cronbach authored *Course Improvement Through Evaluation* in which he argued that evaluation activities should primarily consider the degree to which a program promoted desired consequences. At that time, American educators still had limited interest in evaluation, but that would soon change.

In 1965, the U.S. Congress enacted the ESEA (Elementary and Secondary Education Act) through which substantial funding was provided to local educational systems. Now that the federal government had a stake in education, which had historically been left to the hands of individual states, it was argued by Senator Robert F. Kennedy and his colleagues that evaluation be mandated. Evaluation fever was infectious through the 1970's, as was naiveté. Much to the dismay of the truly dedicated educators, it was discovered that educational decisions were politically driven. Although discouraging, once educational evaluators recognized the political nature of policy making, they focused efforts on what Cronbach calls "the relevant political community" (pp. 1-6). In the case of the Johnson & Wales University's Oral Communication Competencies Assessment, this relevant community includes business and industry leaders, alumni, administration, faculty and students.

The National Institute of Education released a report in 1984, *Involvement in Learning*, which charged colleges and universities to explicitly assess the impact they are having on students. This report, and others by the Association of American Colleges and the National Governor's Association, directed national attention "toward the assessment

movement and toward improving the educational effectiveness of colleges and universities. These concerns have caused a growing expectation by legislatures, governing boards, and academic administrators that assessment information on students' academic achievements be made available" (Underwood and Nowaczyk, 1994 p. 1).

Underwood and Nowaczyk contend that institutions must not undertake assessment initiatives simply to meet the requirements of accrediting bodies, but rather, to focus on program improvement; "the only legitimate reason, from an academic perspective for which assessment should be undertaken" (p. 1). Further, "responsibility for assessment of general education should be assigned to a committee whose sole charge is general education, or to a committee formed to address assessment activities" (p. 1).

THE JOHN HAZEN WHITE SCHOOL OF ARTS & SCIENCES ASSESSMENT HISTORY

Johnson & Wales University has extended its educational outreach by establishing several branch campuses (Charleston, South Carolina; Norfolk, Virginia; North Miami, Florida; and Vail, Colorado) in addition to the main campus in Providence, Rhode Island. The Rhode Island campus is comprised of the College of Business, the College of Culinary Arts, the Hospitality College, the John Hazen White School of Arts & Sciences, and the Graduate School. Each school and college is individually responsible for assessment of the major field and/or program in which students receive a degree. Although the School of Arts & Sciences does not grant degrees, it provides General Education as a service function to all students through the integration of liberal arts courses into the University's unique Career Education programs.

The School of Arts & Sciences formed an Outcomes Assessment Committee chaired by the Assistant Dean, and began its work as a formal committee in September, 1993. By

May 24, 1994, the Outcomes Assessment Committee had conducted a curriculum audit and piloted an assessment of written competencies.

The first meeting of the 1994-95 academic year was held on December 9, 1994. The Dean of the School of Arts & Sciences appointed Joanne M. Crossman, Assistant Professor of Freshman Studies, as the new Outcomes Assessment Chair. Additional members were selected for the committee by their respective Department Chairs, to assure that the committee was represented by the School's four departments which include: Freshman Studies, Math & Science, Humanities, and Social Science. The committee's first charge was to review prior work and empirical research in assessment. Next, the committee designed, planned and implemented pilot programs to assess both oral and written competencies. Findings, and recommendations were reported to the Dean, Assistant Dean, Department Chairs, and faculty.

Recommendations for design of the Oral Communication Competencies Assessment Project included:

1) The presentation of an In-service by the Outcomes Assessment Committee and a representative of the Arts & Sciences administration, to further discuss faculty's role in assessment.

2) A uniform statement on all syllabi to reiterate the University's commitment to outcomes assessment and to reiterate that all faculty and students are to be involved in this ongoing initiative.

3) Increased administrative support to obtain resources and to increase faculty input/participation.

4) A change of semantics: "Arts & Sciences Outcomes" to "Arts & Sciences Outcomes: General Education Transferable Skills."

5) Clearly communicate in writing, the standards for written and oral competencies on all Arts & Sciences Syllabi. The Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics are the standard for outcomes/performance assessment. The subsequent step will be to include these standards on all syllabi in all schools and colleges in which oral and written communication is an outcome.

6) Faculty in all Arts & Sciences courses (later all courses offered by the University)

requiring oral presentations, review and reinforce standards of excellence in communication.

7) Embed all outcome/performance assessments within courses.

8) Conduct a pilot program using the designed rubrics to assess communications competencies of Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts students.

10) Use the findings as a catalyst to improve teaching and learning.

These recommendations have been acted upon. By the winter of 1995, each school/college had established its own Outcomes Assessment Committee and bylaws and had begun an extensive curriculum audit. Several assessment initiatives are now in place.

Further, this researcher was also appointed to establish and Chair the University Outcomes Assessment Committee. Membership is comprised of two faculty members from each school/college Outcomes Assessment Committee (the Committee Chair and an additional member), a representative of Executive Administration (in this case, the Vice President of Academic Affairs), representatives from Career Development, Student Success, Practicum Education, the University Library, and one representative from each branch campus. As stated in the bylaws, the purpose of the committee is to monitor the validity of all university assessment activities, and where appropriate, make recommendations to the University's schools, colleges and branch campuses. It is intended that these efforts will redefine and refine learning and instruction at the course, program, field of study and curriculum level, thereby promoting the Mission of Johnson & Wales University and achieving the objectives of each school and college.

HISTORY IS INTERESTING, BUT WHY ARE WE DOING THIS NOW AND WHY THIS FORM OF ASSESSMENT?

There are many reasons for assessment of learning which are appropriate as a basis for undertaking assessment at any time. As to now, Fitzpatrick (1995) reminds us that the well

educated student is defined by many: parents, teachers, administrators, students, business and industry leaders, to name but a few. As we approach the new millennium, these constituents must share in a consensus of what the learner must know and achieve. The politics of education is not to be overlooked. "The ultimate goal is to create a definition of a shared vision for student learning that all stakeholders can endorse and support" (1995 p. 15). Clearly, this vision will change as emerging technologies and issues become more a part of the learners' lives; therefore, schools "must commit to the continuous renewal and refinement of the vision of the successful graduate." Fitzpatrick (1990 p. 15) also calls for "organized abandonment:" the willingness to break with blind tradition which once called for cover to cover learning, just because it is status quo. Difficult and honest decisions must be made about what is most essential in the curriculum and the resulting learning experiences must be supported by a commitment to professional development.

Systems which commit to challenging and meaningful outcomes, must also commit to comprehensive faculty support programs including ample time for collaboration, common planning and reflection. M. F. Smith (1988) stressed that using program theory as a basis for design, and taking a stakeholder orientation, are vital for evaluation design. Program theory calls for identification of causal links between the program and its intended effects. Identifying causal links can 1) contribute to understanding how people and organizations interact to solve problems; 2) determine if failure to show positive impact is a failure of how the program is implemented, or rather, a result of applying the wrong program for a particular audience; 3) uncover unintended effects; 4) identify portions of a program that contribute to success and; 5) enable the selection of variables and measures most valid for the program and questions being asked (p. 12). Fitzpatrick (1995) finally advocates "defining learning outcomes that will serve not only as the basis for curriculum development efforts but also as the decision screen for selecting the most promising instructional strategies to help students achieve the learning outcomes" (p. 16).

As the public continues to demand accountability in higher education, college faculty must respond positively. If the inquiries are dismissed, or those not directly involved in teaching collect numbers just for the sake of going through the motions of assessment, the results could be damaging to faculty and students. It is possible that this nonchalant response will bring about intervention from public officials and policy makers, much like what has happened in elementary and secondary education. Further, by not responding, the non-educators who will continue to demand accountability, will likely turn to "commercial testing agencies or other groups outside academia for answers" (Schilling and Schilling 1993 p. A40). Faculty should engage in answering the public's questions by creating approaches to assessing the **value** of education in terms of performance outcomes, and by using those assessments to improve education. Yet to assess learning, faculty must be able to define in specific terms how the curriculum is structured, not simply what goes on in their own classes. Further, they must be able to evaluate the quality of their own work and its appropriateness for students' needs. This requires literal and figurative opening of classroom doors (Schilling and Schilling, 1993 p. A 40).

Indeed, traditionally, most teaching in higher education is very private; a misinterpretation of the term "academic freedom." Schilling and Schilling (1993) contend that the clandestine nature of teaching may stem from fears that faculty will be found inadequate. The result of this closed door policy is exacerbated by the fact that few instructors were taught how to teach in graduate school; so many simply imitate their own undergraduate professors. Since faculty have difficulty providing concrete answers about what students do in college, it is no wonder the public has become skeptical, and that many institutions are currently involved in assessment programs. For example, at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, a representative sample of the 1994 graduating class was asked to assemble a comprehensive portfolio of all their undergraduate course work. Included in the portfolios were exams, quizzes, computational exercises, photographs of art projects, computer programs, case studies etc.

The contents of the portfolio were photocopied at the end of each semester and the originals were returned to the students. Materials and data were then coded, categorized and summarized to create profiles of the average student.

The portfolios provided information about the average student in terms of: number of pages of work completed each semester, kinds of work (research, creative writing, reaction, personal essays, analysis, etc.). Further, the portfolios revealed information about curricular goals such as critical thinking, appreciating diversity and understanding social change. The narrative summaries about each portfolio helped to discern the range of topics covered, the number of essay vs objective tests, and the nature of research projects and field observations This methodology has proved effective both for diagnostic purposes and for public relations.

In terms of public relations, assessment information should be shared with faculty through newsletters, and with parents during summer orientations. Data on curriculum and teaching effectiveness can, in turn, be brought to faculty, and portfolios can be shared with the public; thus answering the public's outcry: What are you teaching these students? What really goes on in college? Descriptive assessment can help faculty avoid government-mandated tests or standards designed to hold them accountable, and will provide specific examples of teaching and learning. Finally, assessment can provide insight about what we are asking of our students, and if, in fact, this is the work we want them to do (Schilling and Schilling, 1993 p. A40).

Peter T. Ewell (1988) states that "assessment is about institutional change; an ultimate objective is to help create a campus culture that is better informed about and more conducive to improvements in teaching and learning" (p. 15). In fact, when initiating assessment programs, it is best to begin with pilot programs: "most successful programs have begun with pilot projects... Pilot projects usually cover a wide range of techniques,

and units are allowed considerable discretion in method...From a political standpoint, the best pilots involve units that are already committed to using assessment" (p. 19).

Rubin et al. (1995) point out that assessment initiatives may soon be required in public education "not only for teacher accountability, but to assure colleges that basic skills have been learned in high school (p.38). Goals 2000 mandates speaking and listening competencies in high school and therefore, higher education's role may be to further enhance those skills and/or to place students in courses most appropriate for the skill level they demonstrate. This premise is based on studies using the CCAI (Communication Competency Assessment Instrument) which was developed by The SCA (Speech Communication Association) Committee on Assessment and Testing who identified essential communication skills for elementary and secondary students.

Further, Bassett et. al identified four main categories of speaking and listening competencies for high school graduates: communication codes **(including pronunciation, tone and clarity)**, oral message evaluation **(including recognizing feedback and distinguishing among purposes)**, basic speech communication skills **(including clear thesis and main points, defending point of view, organization of ideas)**, and human relations **(describing differences in opinions, making a self introduction)** (p. 34). The SCA adopted and endorsed the skills constituting these competencies and the scheme itself; it serves as SCA's recommendation for what should be taught in high schools" (p. 31). Johnson & Wales University teaches, reinforces and assesses those same skills and concurs that speech skills assessments should not attempt to include listening skills assessments.

The John Hazen White School of Arts & Sciences Outcomes Assessment Committee called for and was supported in its recommendation that the standards for oral competencies be articulated on all Arts and Sciences course Syllabi. The Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics are the standard (See Mastery Document and Rubrics pp. 47-51).

The subsequent step was to share the rubrics with every Johnson & Wales University undergraduate school, college, and branch campus. Faculty training in rubrics use and interpretation of results is also especially important because the onus of assessment falls upon the teacher who may not have had assessment training as part of his/her teacher training (Maeroff, 1991 p. 280). Maeroff (1991) further contends that the best way to get students to reach the expected outcomes is to familiarize them with the expectations; students should see the criteria by which they will be rated (p. 279).

Because accountability is now attached to outcomes, some institutions have been very successful in communicating the philosophy of outcomes assessment to their faculty and students and engendering participation from both groups. For example, King's College in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania was recognized as one of America's Best, by *University News and World Report* and *Barron's Best Buys in College Education* (King's College Catalogue 1994-95 p. 4). As a college of Liberal Arts and Sciences, King's shares many of the general education goals so highly valued by Johnson & Wales University. D.W. Farmer, Vice President of Academic Affairs at King's, explains that assessment "should be seen in a positive way for the promise it holds for improving both the quality and quantity of learning taking place for students" (1988 p.150).

Supported by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Ernest L. Boyer's (1987) *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America* and literature reviews by Derek Bok, former President of Harvard University, President Farmer (1988) contends :

> It is unacceptable to divorce assessment from improving teaching and learning... Used diagnostically, assessment also helps faculty to identify students' strengths and weaknesses. This information can then be used to design appropriate teaching/learning strategies to support under-prepared students as well as to challenge superior students. An additional diagnostic use of assessment is to help

> faculty monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum and to provide the basis for its further refinement. Assessment speaks directly to curricular questions such as sequencing of courses, the relationship of teaching strategies to course objectives, the responsiveness of assignments and examinations to course objectives, and whether or not the curriculum encourages cumulative learning for students (1988 p. 153).

Farmer continues, "assessments should not be designed to assess what is easiest to assess but rather what is more difficult to assess. It is learning that is more difficult to assess that represents the true measure of quality education. It is this learning that is more appropriately associated with the intended outcomes of liberal education (1988 p. 152).

A sound oral communication assessment will be authentic, clearly delineate the skills for mastery and the competency level for each skill. As indicated in the Johnson & Wales Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics, "excellent," "impressive," "adequate," "developing," and "rudimentary" scores reflect the students' ability to **use** what they have learned; to transfer their communication skills regardless of the topic. Finally, if the assessment is to promote learning, it must be shared with students, faculty and other constituencies... The systematic assessment of oral communication competencies is anything but an easy task.

BACKGROUND:
METHODS OF ORAL COMMUNICATION ASSESSMENT:
HOW HAVE ORAL COMMUNICATIONS COMPETENCIES BEEN ASSESSED?

Formal assessment studies of oral communication across the curriculum are limited. However, the assessment reports which do exist suggest that cross curricular communication increases oral communication skills. These include assessments at Central College in Iowa, The School of Management at Clarkson University, the University of New Mexico,

Radford University in Virginia, and Hamline University in Minnesota. While learning theory also predicts increased content specific learning resulting from cross curricular oral communication activities, no controlled studies have addressed the issue (Aitken and Neer, 1992 pp. 357-363).

Oral communication across the curriculum is becoming an increasingly popular means of developing the skills essential to communication prowess, and like the more established writing across the curriculum, is derived from the "language across the curriculum" movement that began in Great Britain in the 1960's. Most undergraduates take one communications course (if any), unless they are speech majors. Modaff and Hopper (1984) report in Cronin and Glenn (1991) that "oral communication activities represent a fundamental mode of learning and are underutilized in lecture-oriented college courses" (p.356). Steinfatt's 1986 study (as cited in Cronin and Glenn, 1991) contends creating and communicating a message is at the heart of the educational experience. Assessing these skills is another matter.

When assessing any competencies, The National Study of School Evaluation in Schaumburg, Illinois contends that there are three critical, defining features for teaching and learning. These characteristics are **coherence**, **congruence**, and **commitment to student success** (Fitzpatrick, 1995).

The critical features are defined as follows:

Coherence: The learner and the community are provided, through definitive learning outcomes, an explicit definition of the learner's essential learning, performance-based indicators and standard goals. Further, standards and expectations are made coherent and describe the well educated graduate. This concept differs from traditional learning in "Carnegie units based on the implicit assumptions of what may or may not constitute" credits and years of study (Fitzpatrick, 1995 p. 9).

Next, is **congruence** with expected learning in development of the curriculum, instructional strategies and learning activities. The assessment criteria must be authentic measures of student learning; not an exercise in testing what is easy to test. Finally, there is a need for commitment to student success. The "teaching for learning equation" is comprised of constants and variables. The constants are essential learning outcomes, while the variables include time for learning, teaching strategies for learning activities and design of assessment measures. Assessment and instruction must be integrated; assessment data, once analyzed, must be used "to direct the design of interventions in behalf of student learning" (Fitzpatrick, 1995 p. 14).

Aitken and Neer (1992) state that "effective application of oral communication competence involves the source, message, the receiver (s), and the context. Four major competency areas are identified: **audience adaptability** (e.g. selection of materials appropriate to the particular audience, and developing and maintaining credibility), **organizational ability** (e.g. effective use of transitions, conclusions, transitional devices and different patterns of organization), **message preparation** (e.g. selection of visual, emotional, and logical support), and **message presentation** (e.g. verbal and non verbal delivery style) (p. 274). Johnson & Wales University faculty opted to **further define message presentation in terms of voice/articulation/language and delivery/non verbals.**

Johnson & Wales University also chose to use the Oral Communication Competencies Assessment Rubrics and concur with Aitken and Neer who report:

> We have a responsibility not only to quantify scores, but to report specific competencies that our student achieve. Careful scrutiny of such reports will provide university and state administrators with more accurate information about the quality of students' educational

> experiences. University administrators, therefore, would encourage academic departments to make full use of the assessment process with the understanding that the large expenditures of time involved must be recognized as an integral part of faculty workloads. Academic departments also must bear the responsibility of keeping the administration informed on assessment procedures and outcomes, and the time invested in each. Assessment isn't new; faculty have always assessed student learning. We have passed the time, however, when faculty can respond to assessment only as individual teachers. The need now is to effectively communicate our assessment results to administrative levels while pedagogically responding to assessment as a collective faculty (pp. 284-285).

There is little systematic work on the assessment of speaking and listening; yet these communication skills are perhaps the most important that people possess. It is clear that many people are ineffective communicators, yet without exception, business leaders have identified communication as a priority skill for employees. Several studies reveal the tremendous amount of time people spend communicating in the workplace and in their personal lives. In fact, research by Wolvin in 1991, suggests that employees of major corporations report spending more that half their time listening. Studies done in 1986, 1988 and 1992 reaffirm that effective management and successful leadership are directly tied to communication skills (Daly, 1994 p.114).

Assessment of these vital communication skills at the college level will ultimately "provide guidelines, shape new priorities and offer systematic feedback...and force scholars of communication to define their concepts, placing them within...reality based contexts" (p.115). Further, the assessments will filter down to the elementary and

secondary level, encouraging systematic teaching of communication skills. Daly contends that assessment will pose difficult challenges including these realizations: 1) Any assessment of communication must include simple behavior i.e.: knowing what to do is not the same as doing it. 2) There is a need to carefully consider outcomes in addition to performances i.e.: did the speaker accomplish his/her interactive goal? 3) Obtaining valid and reliable indices will be far more costly that those assessments where written measurements suffice. Finally, nonverbal communication must be included in assessment as it pertains both in terms of encoding and decoding messages.

The setting for assessment has traditionally been the classroom, but experimental technologies can also be considered. Those include 1) assessment centers where groups of participants are presented with a variety of tasks or games which are often communication related. Raters evaluate interpersonal skills. This methodology has a history of good reliability and validity. 2) The round robin analysis where a group of people have a series of conversations with one another i.e.; person A chats with person B while C and D talk. After a period of time, person A speaks with C, B with D etc. Each interaction is coded so that the rater can distinguish what each individual contributes to the conversation. 3) Videotechnology including interactive videodisks. Computer-assisted videodisks can increase competencies in questioning, conflict management and presentation preparation (p.118).

Effective communicators must be able to demonstrate:
1) situational appropriateness 2) involvement and responsiveness 3) adaptability and flexibility 4) clarity 5) efficiency 6) goal accomplishment and 7) politeness. Researchers generalize the three major communication functions: to inform, to persuade, and to develop and maintain relationships. These functions, judged along with appropriateness and effectiveness, provide a "useful schematic representation for communication

evaluation, regardless of the particular skill being assessed or the context within which the assessment is taking place" (pp.132-133).

It is clear that as we approach the new millennium, assessment mandates will continue to be a fact of life and a priority in higher education. Colleges and universities are consistently asked to demonstrate that students are learning what is being taught. While most institutions are struggling with general education assessment, communication specialists in education have found the assessment of oral communications competencies to be particularly challenging. The complexity of communication led the National Speech Communication Association to develop nine principles to provide guidance for communications assessment: (Hay, 1992)

1) Assessment should be based on goals/objectives defined and operationalized by the faculty of specific programs within the context of a particular department.

2) Program assessment is an ongoing process conducted for the purpose of program improvement and student learning within a particular institution.

3) Assessment needs to provide data relevant to student knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

4) Assessment should recognize the competing demands of constituencies involved: graduate schools, employers, internship supervisors, professional associations, other departments served by communication courses, and students.

5) Assessment should be based on multiple methods appropriate to a given program rather than any single test.

6) Assessment instruments and procedures should be externally validated.

7) Assessment data collection, interpretation, and storage should be the province of the faculty in the department.

8) Program assessment is the responsibility of every faculty member.

9) The learning environment is enhanced by the inter-relationship among the department's instruction, research, creative activities, and service goals. Therefore, a program's collective

contribution to its multiple constituencies through research, creative activities, and service should ultimately be part of program assessment.

The Johnson & Wales University Oral Communication Competencies Assessment Project is addressing each of these guidelines. The University, like most institutions is currently piloting assessment programs and strives to remain aware of trends, such as those Hay (1990) reports:

> In the Fall of 1990, a national survey was conducted by an ad hoc committee of the Speech Communication Association, to discern the overall status of assessment activities in the United States. The survey focused on: general education assessment, oral communication assessment, and communication department assessment activities, as well as other constituencies with an interest in student oral communication abilities. Three hundred and thirty institutions responded representing both private and non private institutions in fifty states with two and four year programs, undergraduate and graduate programs, and geographic diversity. The respondents were therefore typical of the characteristics of institutions of higher education in the United States (pp. 249-250).

The general consensus drawn from the results of this survey was that assessment is an important priority. At these institutions, data analysis is generally the province of the administration because there was little direct impact for students and faculty. This is not the case at Johnson & Wales University. The data from all pilot programs to date have been shared with faculty and will be the catalysts for curriculum reform. Most institutions indicated that there was little faculty ownership of assessment. To date, this is also the case at Johnson & Wales University, however, the 1994-95 year end report identified faculty participation as a priority, and as such it will be a mandate beginning in the 1995-96 academic year. Hay (1990) further reported that the survey also revealed that most systematic data on general education was provided by course evaluations and was frequently used for evaluation of faculty. The American Association of Higher Education warns that such practices will undercut the potential of student

achievement data. Competencies were generally assessed in classroom settings, sometimes in cross-curricular programs. Since much data is collected through alumni surveys and course evaluation, many Department Chairs in the survey requested assistance in locating and developing appropriate measures and instruments.

It was very interesting to note that one third of the institutions reported that they did not identify goals/objectives at the department level. Johnson & Wales University has clearly defined its department, school, college and university goals.

Results of this national survey suggest that assessment activities in communications departments are limited (pp. 254-257). This further supports the need for the Oral Communication Competencies Assessment Project at Johnson & Wales University.

Pavitt (1989) attempted to discern how impressions and evaluations relevant to competence in oral communication are formed. He concluded that the type of impression a communicator gives is a predictable function of their behavior and the observer's preconceptions about the behavior, other behaviors and traits. That is, communication experts/ faculty/ practitioners should be able to recommend a set of behaviors to help communicators achieve desired images. This speaks to the oral communication competency: knowing and having concern for the audience. Pavitt further observed in his studies that the observer's overall impression of the communicator is closely associated with competence evaluations. The communicator's traits including ethos, ethics, knowledge of subject, confidence, and professionalism are essential to the Johnson & Wales Oral Communication Competencies Assessment Project (pp. 428-429).

In *A Longitudinal Study of College Student's Communication Competence*, Rubin et al. (1990 p. 12) reported that communication competence scores decreased in the Sophomore year, which may be natural due to the difficulties historically equated with Sophomore year. They further noted that Freedman (1956) coined the phrase "sophomore slump." Feldman & Newcomb (1969) contended that sophomores are the most dissatisfied with their life, are characteristically confused and uncertain (Furr & Gunnaway, 1982), because of an identity crisis which

encompasses sophomore's social as well as academic life (Margolis, 1976). 'Sophomore slump is more than just a cliché used to describe students' personal problems. Sophomore slump occurs during a trying developmental period' (Lemons and Richmond, 1987). What is interesting here, is that the Johnson & Wales University Oral Communication Competencies Assessment measured both traditional sophomores (in a four year program) and sophomores in a two year program. The data were analyzed to determine if there is a difference between the two groups, which would support the "sophomore slump" theory.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Obtaining legal and administrative approval for the project was a priority. This procedure included meetings with the Assistant Dean of the College of Culinary Arts, the Director of the Culinary Arts Bachelors Degree Program, the Chair of the Culinary Arts Academic Studies Department, and the Dean and Assistant Dean of the John Hazen White School of Arts & Sciences. Further, with the approval of University Executive Administration, the Outcomes Assessment statement is now included in all college catalogues and course syllabi. (Outcomes Statement: Johnson & Wales University is committed to its Outcomes Assessment initiative. All faculty and students are therefore part of an on-going study to determine and refine the effectiveness of instruction and learning. Students' names will not be used when reporting results.)

Next, internal memos to faculty were drafted and distributed, the Student Demographic Survey was designed, data base options were explored and, this quasi experimental project proceeded as follows:

All Arts & Sciences and Culinary Arts faculty received class rosters on September 7, 1995. A memo was distributed requesting that faculty who require oral presentations in their classes, participate in this pilot assessment project. The memo stressed that the Outcomes Assessment initiative was strongly supported by administration as the University continues to integrate General Education with Career Education. Faculty were asked to list their name, courses, sections, number of students, and students' class rank (Freshmen-Senior). Faculty response to this memo provided essential cross referencing information to determine which sections of students (students usually travel in units much like tracking) were required to make presentations in one, two, or three courses. The term from September 7 through November 24, 1995 was the only term that the Freshmen,

Sophomore, and Senior students would be enrolled in academic studies. Their next rotations were into laboratory classes. Juniors enroll in two terms of academic studies and one of laboratory classes. The Culinary Arts Registrar's Office reported the total population of students enrolled in academic studies during the first term as follows: The **total** population was 397 Freshmen, 287 Sophomores, 67 Juniors, 37 Seniors. **Of these, 505 students** were required to make oral presentations in at least one of their academic classes. A detailed profile of this student population will follow.

The initial memo revealed that seventeen faculty required oral presentations in their classes that term, and each of these faculty participated in the study. At the end of the term, a memo was written to each instructor and their appropriate dean to document their participation in this pilot project. Faculty teaching courses in their respective disciplines represented both the John Hazen White School of Arts & Sciences and the College of Culinary Arts.

The ten courses (34 sections) included in the study were as follows:

Freshmen Courses

English Composition (4 sections)

Menu Design and Analysis (1 section)

Finite Mathematics (2 sections)

Sophomore Courses

Speech Communication (10 sections)

Culture and Food (7 sections)

Personalized Nutrition Management (6 sections)

Junior Course

Advanced Buffet Catering (1 section)

Junior/Senior Courses

Food in Film and Literature (1 section)

Ethics (1 section)

Senior Course

Food Science (1 section)

Intercoder reliability was determined as follows: The faculty who participated in the pilot project were asked to view and score two video taped student presentations, using the Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics as the scoring instrument. The video speeches used for this training allowed evaluators to score exactly the same speeches; exact replication of live speeches is impossible. Therefore, the videos aided in reliability. Further, the presentations were not made by Johnson & Wales University students, thereby eliminating one source of rater bias. The videos are ancillary to the text used at the University, *Public Speaking* (Osborn, 1994). Each faculty member discussed the rubrics and procedure with the researcher prior to, and after, the scoring and reported that while the rubrics were new to them, they were clear and easy to work with. Reliability coefficients were computed on the scores from the training assessments, using Coefficient Alpha which applies to reliability of scales where more than two responses are possible, as referenced in Slavin (1992 pp. 191-192). Intercoder ratings rendered .72 reliability for video tape number one and .89 reliability for video tape number two. (See Appendix # 2 -3).

Faculty were asked to distribute and collect the Student Demographic Survey (see Appendix #1 Student Demographic Survey). The survey was created to assess student variables for the sake of internal reliability. By creating the survey with B*ubble Works* software, it was therefore possible for the results to be scanned. The Demographic Survey was then imported into *Excel 4 for Windows*.

Faculty then received a memo explaining the time frame for Oral Communication Competencies Assessment, and the corresponding number of copies of the assessment rubrics. The assessments took place during the later part of the term (weeks 7-10 of the 11 week term).

As the assessments were submitted, they were manually entered on the *Excel 4 for Windows* spreadsheets which previously recorded the students' demographic data. The students' presentation scores were entered chronologically to ensure accurate tracking of each performance. The demographic and presentation data were converted to a text file and were analyzed using *SPSS 6.1* software.

The Freshmen presentation results generated a baseline for students who have not studied Communication Skills at the University. Sophomore presentations made in the EN1030 course (Communication Skills) generated a baseline for students concurrently studying Communication Skills. Assessments of Sophomore presentations in other classes provided additional data about communication competency. Juniors and Seniors (comparatively few in number--most students opt for a two year program only), provided data for cross year comparison of communication competency.

DESIGNING AND PILOTING THE RUBRICS

In 1994, the Chair of the John Hazen White School of Arts & Sciences Outcomes Assessment Committee (this researcher) designed the Oral Communication Mastery Document, and the Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics (see pp. 47-51). These documents were edited and approved by the committee, faculty from each department in the School of Arts & Sciences, Department Chairs, and University administration. The University has embraced the philosophy of identifying and sharing with stakeholders, which is supported by M. F. Smith (1988) who identifies stakeholder orientation as having

profound importance for maximum utilization of evaluations (Baker, 1983; Cooley, 1983; Eash, 1985; Seigal and Tuckel, 1985; Cooley and Bickel, 1986; Patton 1986; Chelimasky, 1987).

The stakeholders should be involved in all phases of design including need identification, strategies for obtaining information, analyzing, and disseminating results. The more involved the stakeholder becomes with the evaluation, the more targeted its results will be, and the more used the results will be. However, "evaluators who try to serve everyone's needs for information may end up serving no one very effectively" (p. 12). The rubrics were piloted in the 1994-95 academic year by four faculty. A total of 64 student presentations were evaluated in 7 sections (4 different courses). Each of the faculty reported ease of scoring, and a comprehensive understanding of the criteria set forth on the rubrics. However, intercoder reliability was not calculated in the initial pilot of the instrument.

The Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics have also been used as a "Peer Evaluation" tool, which is an integral part of the EN1030 Communication Skills course required of all students. Allison et al. (1994) note that peer evaluations can be conducted through oral or written modes or both. Further, if the "formalized reactions from multiple observers" do in fact impact on evaluation, students will begin to understand the "social/political/cultural dynamics of their performances" (p. 217). "Through criticism of the performance, the performer and audience are encouraged to explain how their background, membership in certain groups and personal experiences predispose them to respond in the way that they do" (pp. 216-217). That is, the learners discover how performances affect their audiences.

VALIDITY OF THE INSTRUMENT

Validity of evaluation instruments are of paramount importance. Zahn and Hopper (1985) identified the fundamental dimensions underlying speech evaluations and subsequently developed the Speech Evaluation Instrument (SEI). Subsequent research with the SEI has validated the factorial structure of the three dimensions of evaluation: **superiority** (socioeconomic judgments reflecting listener perceptions of status, intellect and speaking competency); **attractiveness** (judgments of likeability, pleasantness, and general social appeal of the speaker); and **dynamism** perception of speech activity level, strength, and aggressiveness (pp. 53-54). Zahn (in press) concluded that "researchers must attend carefully to the characteristics of the speech, how raters are construing the speech, and how they are responding to the measure" (p.58). This notion suggests the need for intercoder reliability and validity which is addressed in this study through training of faculty who ultimately conducted the assessment.

The Johnson & Wales University Oral Communication Competencies Assessment Pilot Program is designed to determine if students demonstrate communication competencies, **and** at what level of performance these competencies are demonstrated.

Manning contends that if designed properly, evaluation instruments should assess the extent to which learners have mastered content. Further, only items that are directly related to mastery should be included and the instrument should be reviewed to assure discrimination. The instrument which does not discriminate is not valid. Discrimination refers to the instrument's capability to separate those who have learned the content being assessed from those who have not (1986, in Barak and Brier 1990, pp. 139-140). The Johnson & Wales University Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics specifically articulate the competencies at performance levels from "excellent" through the unacceptable performance of "rudimentary."

Communication rating instruments are typically atomistic or holistic. Atomistic evaluations are designed to evaluate the parts or specific traits of product or performance with no attempt to produce a single, comprehensive rating. The holistic approach applies when the evaluator is rating the whole product or performance. However, analytic methods also may be incorporated. That is, the evaluators may rate and sum the parts (Goulden, 1992 pp. 260-261). The Johnson & Wales University Oral Communication Assessment Instruments are based on the Holistic/Analytic methodology. Five competency areas are classified, as are five levels of performance. This enables us to refine teaching and learning of specific competencies. Then, an average performance score is generated to report overall communication mastery.

Since the John Hazen White School of Arts & Sciences teaches General Education courses (transferable skills), it is charged with monitoring cross curricular transfer of its outcomes. Communication skills clearly transcend programs of study. Is it feasible then for Mathematics, Humanities, and Culinary Arts faculty to assess students' communication competency?

A comprehensive study by Carlson et al. (1995) indicated that public speaking outcomes can be reasonably assessed by evaluators who do not have special speech training. This research concluded that relatively untrained evaluators, when given specific criteria, make judgments similar to those of trained speech professionals. Therefore, public speeches can be evaluated reliably and validly as long as the forms address the age-old constraints of content and delivery. With a minimal amount of practice, novices can evaluate public speeches as reliably and validly as individuals with extensive speech backgrounds (pp. 93-94). The Johnson & Wales University Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics do in fact address content and delivery, as well as concern for audience, organization and structure, and voice, articulation and language.

GENERALIZABILITY OF THE RESULTS

> Popham (1988) discusses generalizability of the inquiry's results:
>
> pivotal difference between research and evaluation stems from the generalizability of the obtained results. An educational researcher is interested in discerning the nature of the relationship among educationally relevant variables. An ideal result of a research investigation would be findings that could be generalized to a wide variety of compatible situations... Evaluation, to the contrary, is typically focused on a particular educational program. There is no intention of generalizing results to other situations. The focus is on this situation and what to do about it...There is a sense in which evaluators are interested in generalizing the results of a particular study to future renditions of a particular local program...By and large, however, educational evaluators are not interested in securing data so that they can generalize their findings to other sites in the nation, world, or galaxy (pp. 11-12).

Realistic expectations for the generalizability of this study focus on the rubrics in particular. This study's rubrics can be generalized among the University's undergraduate schools and colleges and its various branch campuses. Although the study is limited in terms of its unique population, the "C4" Program (Bachelor of Science in Culinary Arts) students may be likened to their counterparts at the University's branch campuses. The first of its kind in the country, the "C4" program currently enrolls a limited number of students. Further research is warranted within the Bachelor's Program to determine trends in Oral Communication proficiency, particularly if the students in this study who indicated their intentions of continuing their studies at Johnson & Wales University, do indeed follow through with their plans.

It is expected that the study will be replicated in other schools and colleges throughout the University and at its various branch campuses. The results can be generalized therefore, to Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts students, and other institutions with similar performance outcome expectations in communications across the curriculum.

SOURCES OF EVIDENCE AND AUTHORITY

INSTRUMENT

The Oral Communication Competencies Assessment Rubrics (see p. 51) are based on the detailed Oral Communication Mastery Document (see pp. 47-50). The Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics were piloted during the 1994-95 academic year by four faculty. A total of 64 student presentations were evaluated in 7 sections (4 different courses). Each of the faculty reported ease of scoring and a comprehensive understanding of the criteria set forth on the rubrics. However, the overall and occurrence reliability was not calculated in this initial instrument pilot.

This study computed intercoder reliability using Coefficient Alpha, which applies to reliability of scales where more than two responses are possible, and rendered .72 reliability for the first training video tape and .89 reliability for the second training video tape. This is fully discussed on page 39 of this document and reported in Appendix # 2-3.

POPULATION

The 17 faculty who participated in this project reported that they require oral presentations in their classes, and represent The John Hazen White School of Arts & Sciences faculty teaching respective Arts & Sciences courses, and the College of Culinary

Arts faculty teaching Culinary and Pastry Arts academic courses. All courses were "day courses" that is, not Continuing Education or Weekend classes.

The population of students was 505. These students enrolled in classes requiring oral presentations also take all their other academic courses concurrently; Johnson & Wales Culinary Arts Freshmen, Sophomores and Seniors take one term of academic studies per year and the subsequent studies are conducted in laboratory settings. Traditional progression for Juniors includes two terms of academic studies. Pastry Arts Freshmen and Sophomores take one term of academic studies per term.

While the descriptives will be detailed in Chapter Four of this study, it is interesting to note some distinctions at this time. The total population enrolled in academic studies during the first term was as follows: 340 Freshmen, 335 Sophomores, 67 Juniors and 37 Seniors. Of the 505 students in the study, 120 were Freshmen (120/340), 284 were Sophomores (284/335), 61 were Juniors (61/67), 32 were Seniors (32/37) and 2 cases did not indicate academic rank. Of the 505 population, there were 342 male, 155 female and 8 cases did not report.

ORAL COMMUNICATION MASTERY DOCUMENT

Note that the document used at the University is printed in a smaller font to reduce the number of pages

ORAL COMMUNICATION MASTERY IS DEMONSTRATED THROUGH THE FOLLOWING COMPETENCIES

CONCERN FOR AUDIENCE

____Creatively chosen/challenging topic, consistent adaptation to audience feedback, clear explanation of audience's stake in listening, immediately establishes and maintains credibility. **EXCELLENT (5)**

____Challenging topic, some adaptation to audience feedback, indication of audience's stake in listening, develops credibility through rapport with audience. **IMPRESSIVE (4)**

____Good topic, inconsistent adaptation to audience feedback, some attempt to make ideas significant for audience. **ADEQUATE (3)**

____Traditional/standard topic, limited adaptation to audience feedback, limited attempt to make ideas significant for audience. **DEVELOPING (2)**

____Inappropriate or undefined topic, disregard for audience, ideas not made significant for audience. **RUDIMENTARY (1)**

ORGANIZATION/STRUCTURE

____Clear thesis, creative introduction and conclusion tied to thesis, arrangement of ideas logical and easy to follow, clearly signaled transitions, repetition of main ideas.
EXCELLENT (5)

____Clear thesis, effective introduction & conclusion related to thesis, arrangement of ideas logical & generally easy to follow, some good transitions, generalized repetition of main ideas.
IMPRESSIVE (4)

____Thesis somewhat unfocused, basic introduction and conclusion related to thesis, arrangement of ideas adequate yet sometimes difficult to follow, attempt at transitions, main ideas fair, some repetition of main ideas. **ADEQUATE (3)**

____Thesis needed refinement, very brief or non existent introduction and conclusion, arrangement of ideas showed some forethought yet generally disorganized, transitions weak or non existing, main ideas briefly mentioned yet not reinforced.
DEVELOPING (2)

____Thesis trite or non existent, no definitive introduction or conclusion, idea flow extremely disorganized, poor or non existing transitions, extremely difficult to follow.
RUDIMENTARY (1)

SUBSTANCE

____Excellent depth of research or support, sources clearly cited-if appropriate, highly supportive/creative visual aids if appropriate, obvious concern for ethics.
EXCELLENT (5)

____In depth/specific support, sources mentioned briefly-if appropriate, good visual aids if appropriate, consideration of ethics. **IMPRESSIVE (4)**

____Clear assertions yet not all were supported, sources mentioned in general terms if appropriate, average visual aids if appropriate, some consideration of ethics. **ADEQUATE (3)**

____Generalized assertions and support, questionable credibility/existence of sources if appropriate, below average or non existing visual aids if appropriate, questionable ethics. **DEVELOPING (2)**

____Trite assertions with no apparent support, inappropriate or non existent sources- if appropriate, poor or non existing visual aids if appropriate, little or no consideration for ethics. **RUDIMENTARY (1)**

VOICE/ARTICULATION/LANGUAGE

____Exemplary vocal variation/expression/volume, clear articulation, appropriate and vivid use of language. **EXCELLENT (5)**

____Good vocal variation/expression/volume with few exceptions, good articulation-some detractions, generally appropriate & vivid/descriptive language. May not be completely adapted to audience at all times. **IMPRESSIVE (4)**

____Vocal quality may be distracting in terms of vocalized pauses (UH, UM, LIKE, YOU KNOW), articulation slightly unpolished, language not entirely appropriate for audience in terms of descriptiveness and word choice. **ADEQUATE (3)**

____Vocal quality generally distracting: monotone/use of upward inflections/or excessive vocalized pauses, articulation sometimes weak, language vague/non descriptive or inappropriate at times. **DEVELOPING (2)**

____ Poor/unprofessional vocal quality, poor articulation: mumbling, or inaudible, constant vocalized pauses/mispronounced words/ and/or dropped endings, language vague or inappropriate for audience. **RUDIMENTARY (1)**

DELIVERY/NON VERBALS

____ Well poised/confident/professional, strong desire to be understood, appropriate pausing and length of time devoted to main ideas, supportive gestures/facial expressions, good movement/use of space, consistent eye contact. **EXCELLENT (5)**

____ Poised/confident/professional, apparent commitment to topic, generally good pausing & length of time devoted to main ideas, supportive gestures/facial expressions quality/quantity may need adjustment, movement/ use of space congruous with setting, maintained good eye contact. **IMPRESSIVE (4)**

____ Displayed some degree of confidence/professionalism but may have appeared nervous, displayed interest in topic/ moderate desire to be understood, may have spoken too quickly, may need to further elaborate ideas or move along more quickly, suitable gestures/facial expressions, may have remained stagnant or made distracting movements, occasional eye contact with audience. **ADEQUATE (3)**

____ Appeared nervous, may have apologized for topic or content, showed only mild desire to be understood, spoke very quickly and/or devoted too much time to irrelevant details, gestures and facial expressions were distracting or non existent, very little movement, little or no eye contact. **DEVELOPING (2)**

____ Clearly devoid of poise/confidence, no apparent concern for topic, inappropriate duration, erratic movement or no movement at all, no eye contact. **RUDIMENTARY (1)**

2/95

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HOLISTIC RUBRICS FOR ORAL COMPETENCIES: ABBREVIATED VERSION ORAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCY MASTERY LEVELS

Student name:_____ **Course:**_____ **Section:**_____
Please circle 1 score for each category. Each area is weighted equally. HOLISTIC SCORE ____
5= EXCELLENT 4= IMPRESSIVE 3= ADEQUATE 2= DEVELOPING 1= RUDIMENTARY

CONCERN FOR AUDIENCE:

5 creative/challenging topic, superior regard for aud., clear stake aud. listening, consist.credible
4 challenging topic, well-adapted to aud., develops credibility through rapport with aud.
3 good topic, inconsistent adaptation to aud. feedback, some attempt to make ideas significant
2 standard topic, limited regard for aud. feedback, limited attempt to make ideas significant
1 inappropriate or undefined topic, disregard for audience

ORGANIZATION/STRUCTURE:

5 clear thesis, creative introduction/ conclusion tied to thesis, effective transitions, repetition
4 clear thesis, effective introduction/ concl. related to thesis, good transitions, generalizations
3 unfocused thesis, basic introduction /concl., attempt at transitions, may be diff. to follow
2 vague thesis, abrupt introduction/ concl., weak transitions, disorganized, no reinforcement
1 no thesis or trite, no intro./ concl., extremely disorganized, poor or non existing transitions

SUBSTANCE:

5 outstanding depth of research/support/, sources cited clearly, obvious ethical concern, visuals++
4 in-depth specific support, brief mention of sources, ethical consideration, good visuals
3 clear assertions, some support, sources mentioned-in general, some consid.of ethics, averg. visuals
2 generalized assertions and support, questionable existence of sources, average or no visuals
1 trite assertions, little/no support, no sources, little/no consid. ethics, no visuals

VOICE/ARTICULATION/LANGUAGE:

5 exemplary expression, vocal variation volume & articulation, appropriate/vivid language
4 good expression, vocal variation, volume & artic., descriptive language-not always adapted
3 noticeable vocalized pauses, distracting-UH-UM-LIKE, unpolished language-not always adapted
2 distracting vocal quality /pauses/ upward inflections, vague or inappropriate language
1 poor vocal quality, poor artic., constant vocalized pauses, language vague/inappropriate

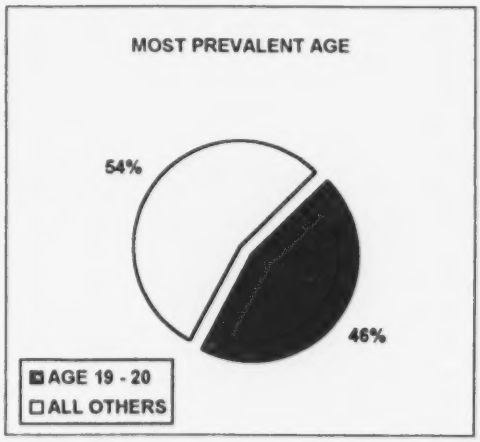
DELIVERY/NON VERBALS:

5 confident/professional, appropriate emphasis/time on main ideas, animated, +eye contact, +use of space, strong desire to be understood, +movement
4 poised, emphasis on main ideas, demonstrative, +eye contact, apparent commitment
3 some of confidence, may speak quickly/ or need to elaborate, some desire to be understood, little animation, may be stagnant/distract. moves,--eye contact
2 appeared nervous, ? apologize for topic or info., spoke very quickly, little animation-eyes
1 devoid of confidence, no concern for topic, --time, erratic or no movement,--eyes CJMC JWU1996

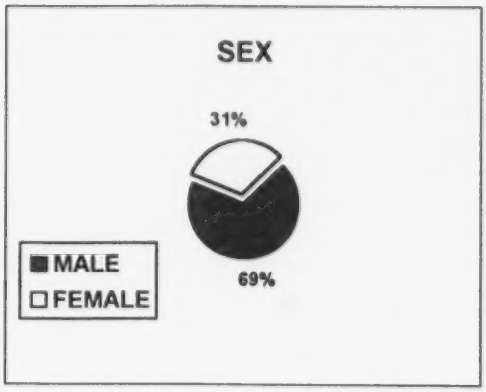
CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION OF DATA
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The Student Demographic Survey, (Appendix p.91) which was administered to all students in classes where instructors required oral presentations in the first term of the 1995-96 academic year (n = 505), generated the following data. These students were the population for the Oral Communication Competencies Assessment Pilot Program.

Age	Number of Students	Valid %
17-18	114	22.8
19-20	230	45.9
21-22	81	16.0.
23-25	33	6.5
25+	43	8.5
Missing Cases	4	

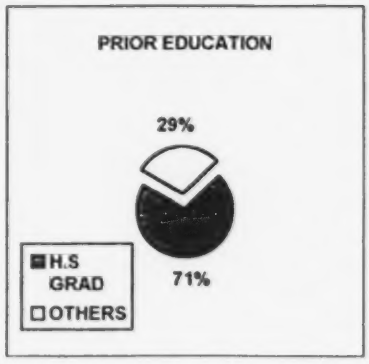


Sex	Number of Students	Valid %
Male	342	68.8
Female	155	31.2
Missing Cases	8	

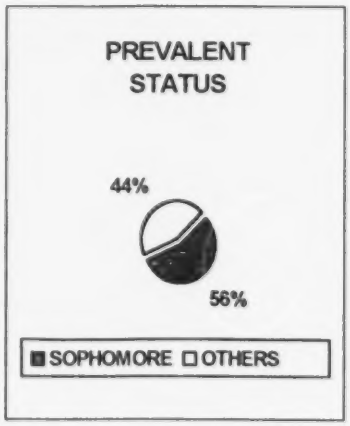


Highest Level of Education Attained Prior to Entering Johnson & Wales

	Number of Students	Valid %
High School Graduate	360	72.1
Some Courses at the College Level	87	17.2
2 Year College Degree From Another Institution	29	5.8
4 Year College Degree From Another Institution	9	1.8
Technical School Graduate	14	2.8
Missing Cases	6	



Current Status at Johnson & Wales	Number of Students	Valid %
Freshmen	120	23.8
Sophomore	284	56.2
Junior	61	12.1
Senior	32	6.3
Graduate/Professional	3	.6
Other	3	.6
Missing Cases	2	

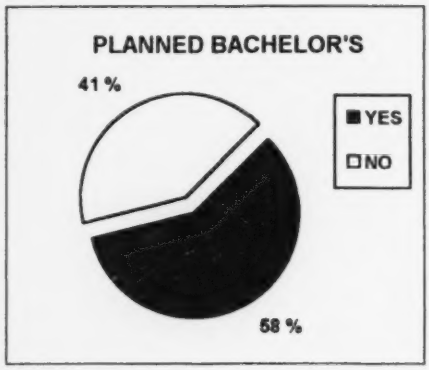


Current Freshmen or Sophomores

Planning to Earn a Bachelor's Degree

At Johnson & Wales

	Number of Students	Valid %
Yes	236	58.4
No	166	41.1
Missing Cases	2	



Total Freshmen + Sophomore Population = 404 Students

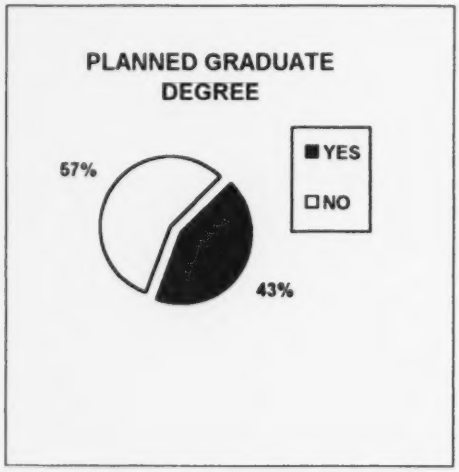
Current Juniors and Seniors

Planning to Earn a Graduate

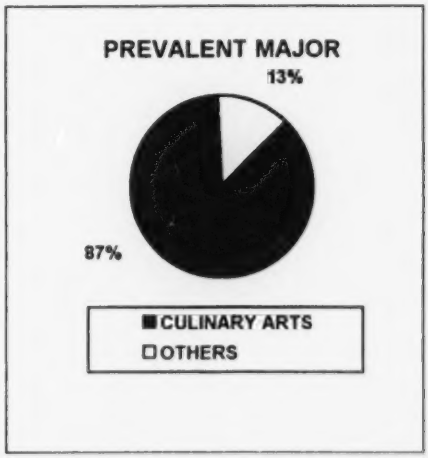
Degree at Johnson & Wales

	Number of Students	Valid %
Yes	40	43
No	53	57

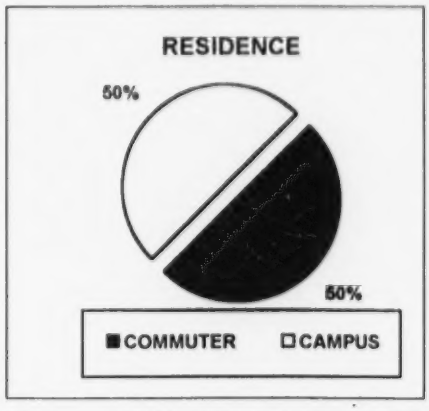
Total Junior + Senior Population = 93



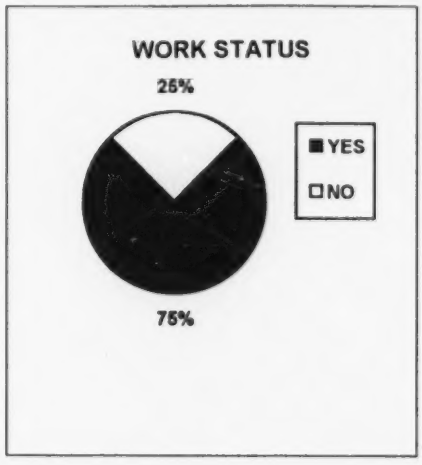
Student Major	Number of Students	Valid %
Culinary Arts	439	87.6
Pastry Arts	56	11.2
Business	3	.6
Hospitality	1	.2
Technology	0	0
Graduate School	2	.4
Missing Cases	4	



Residence	Number of Students	Valid %
Commute to School	251	50.3
Live on Campus	248	49.7
Missing Cases	6	

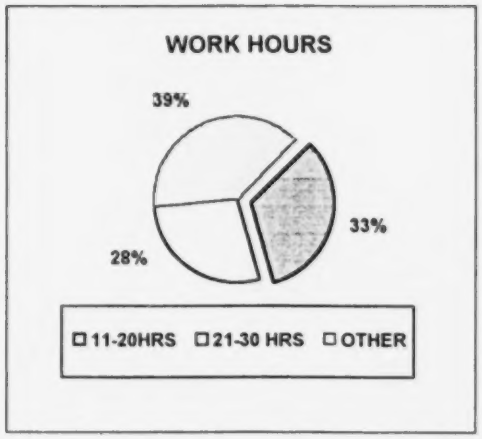


Work During School Year	Number Students	Valid %
Yes	377	74.6
No	125	24.7
Missing Cases	3	



Number of Hours Spent Working Each Week During the School Year

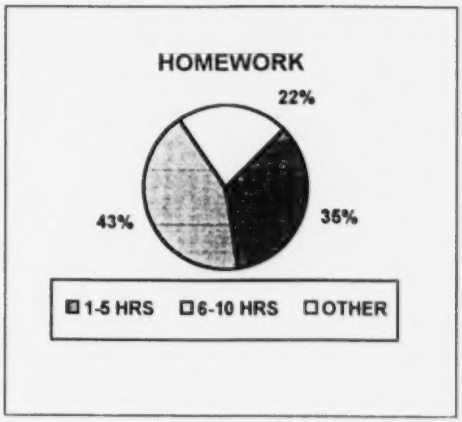
	Number of Students	Valid %
1 - 10 hours	23	6.2
11 - 20 hours	124	33.4
21 - 30 hours	105	28.3
30 - 40 hours	78	21.0
More Than 40 hours	47	12.7



Population of Students Who Work During the School Year = 377

Number of Hours Spent Per Week on School Work Outside of Class, Including Presentations, Studying & Research

	Number of Students	Valid %
1 - 5 hours	174	34.8
6 - 10 hours	217	43.4
11 - 15 hours	81	16.2
16 - 20 hours	28	5.6
Missing Cases	5	



DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY:

MOST FREQUENTLY OCCURRING STATISTICS

The most frequently described student in the Oral Communication Competencies Assessment was a 19-20 year old male Sophomore, majoring in Culinary Arts. He was graduated from high school prior to entering the University, and plans to earn a Bachelor's Degree at Johnson & Wales University. He commutes to school (50.3% commute vs 49.7 % live on campus, 6 missing cases-not conclusive), and works outside of school an average of 11-20 hours per week. He spends 6-10 hours per week on school work outside of class.

RESEARCH QUESTION:

RQ: As demonstrated through the delivery of oral presentations in Arts & Sciences and Culinary Arts Academic courses which require oral presentations, do Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts Sophomore, Junior and Senior students and Pastry Arts Sophomores demonstrate oral communication competencies at an adequate* level?

*(3 on the 1-5 scale)

The entire population of students (505) in the pilot assessment project delivered presentation #1, the basis for the hypothesis. A total of 260 students delivered both presentations #1 and #2, while 96 students delivered presentations #1, #2 and #3. No Senior population was reported for presentation #3. All were scored using the Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics. The following results were reported:

FOR SOPHOMORE, JUNIOR, AND SENIOR STUDENTS:

DATA TO REJECT THE NULL HYPOTHESIS.

H*o*: As demonstrated through the delivery of oral presentations in Arts & Sciences and Culinary Arts Academic courses which require oral presentations, Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts **Sophomore, Junior and Senior** students and Pastry Arts **Sophomores** do not demonstrate oral communication competencies at an adequate level.* *(3 on the 1-5 scale)

Findings For Presentation #1

Group	N	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Freshmen	120	3.5233	.5108	.0466
Sophomore	**284**	**3.4310**	**.6705**	**.0398**
Junior	**61**	**3.3115**	**.8660**	**.1109**
Senior	**32**	**3.3188**	**.7965**	**.1408**
Grad./Professional	3	3.7333	.2309	.1333
Other	3	3.8000	.8000	.4619

The Sophomore, Junior and Senior data were analyzed using The t-Test for Comparison of a Sample Mean to a Population Mean as stated in Slavin (1992 p. 164-65). In this study, a score of 3 is considered the absolute standard.

Test Statistic = $\frac{\text{sample mean} - 3}{\text{standard error}}$

Sophomore Population

T.S. = $\frac{3.4310-3}{.0398} = \frac{.4310}{.0398} =$ 10.83 .5-.4990= .001

% of area lying between the mean and successive standard deviation units under the normal curve renders p value <.001. Therefore, the H*o* is rejected for the Sophomore population. This Johnson & Wales University Sophomore population does demonstrate oral communication competencies at an adequate level.

Junior Population

T.S. = $\frac{3.3115 - 3}{.1109} = \frac{.3315}{.1109} =$ 2.81 .5- .4975= .0025

% of area lying between the mean and successive standard deviation units under the normal curve renders p value .0025<.05. Therefore, the H*o* is rejected for the Junior population, as they also demonstrate oral communication competencies at an adequate level.

Senior Population

T.S. = $\frac{3.3188 - 3}{.1408} = \frac{.3188}{.1408} =$ 2.26 .5-.4881= .0119

% of area lying between the mean and successive standard deviation units under the normal curve renders p value .0119<.05. Therefore, the H*o* is rejected for the Senior population, as well.

The H*o* is therefore rejected. It can be concluded that there is sufficient evidence that the sample mean is greater than 3.

Ancillary Analyses

Presentation #2

Group	N	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Freshmen	17	3.7882	.5678	.1377
Sophomore	202	3.6000	.5293	.0372
Junior	26	3.3692	.6967	.1366
Senior	9	3.2889	.6000	.2003
Grad/Professional	2	3.5000	.7071	.500
Other	1	2.8000		

Sophomore Population

T.S. = $\frac{3.6000 - 3}{.0372} = \frac{.6000}{.0372} =$ 16.129 .5-.49990 = p value = .001

% of area lying between the mean and successive standard deviation units under the normal curve renders p value <.001. Therefore, the H*o* is rejected for the Sophomore population.

Junior Population

T.S. = $\frac{3.3692 - 3}{.1366} = \frac{.3692}{.1366} = 2.70$ .5-4.965=.0035<.05

% of area lying between the mean and successive standard deviation units under the normal curve renders p value .0035<.05. Therefore, the H*o* is rejected for the Junior population.

Senior Population

T.S. = $\frac{3.2889 - 3}{.2003} = \frac{.2889}{.2003} = 1.442$ .5-42.51=.074>.05

Therefore, the Senior mean score of 3.2889 has no significance against the mean absolute standard score of 3.

Presentation #3

Group	N	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Freshmen	3	3.7333	.3055	.1764
Sophomore	84	3.5833	.5160	.0563
Junior	4	3.6000	.2309	.1155
Senior	-	-	-	-
Grad/professional	2	3.8000	.2828	.2000
Other	1	3.6000		

Sophomore Population

T.S. = $\frac{3.5833 - 3}{.0563} = \frac{.5833}{.0563} = 10.36$ .5-.4990=.001

% of area lying between the mean and successive standard deviation units under the normal curve renders p value <.001. Therefore, the H*o* is rejected for the Sophomore population.

Junior Population

T.S.= $\frac{3.600 - 3}{.1155} = \frac{.6000}{.1155} = 5.217$ .5-4490=.001

% of area lying between the mean and successive standard deviation units under the normal curve renders p value <.001. Therefore, the H*o* is rejected for the Junior population.

There was no Senior population in Presentation #3.

DATA FOR SUBSIDIARY QUESTION #1

Do Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts Sophomores,* and Culinary Arts Juniors and Seniors demonstrate oral communication competencies at increasing proficiency in concurrent and/or subsequent course work across academic rank?

*(concurrently studying Communication Skills)

Presentation #1

Group	N	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Freshmen	120	3.5233	.5108	.0466
Sophomore	284	3.4310	.6705	.0398
Junior	61	3.3115	.8660	.1109
Senior	32	3.3188	.7965	.1408
Grad /Professional	3	3.7333	.2309	.1333
Other	3	3.8000	.8000	.4619
Missing Group Identity	2			

Based on mean value, the Freshmen population scored .09 higher than the Sophomore population.

Analysis of Variance

Source	D.F.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Prob.
Between Groups	5	2.9707	.5941	1.3161	.2557
Within Groups	497	224.3594	.4514		

The ANOVA reported (D.F. between groups 5, within groups 497) no significance to determine increasing proficiency across academic rank in presentation #1 (.2557>.05).

Presentation #2

Group	N	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Freshmen	17	3.7882	.5678	.1377
Sophomore	202	3.6000	.5293	.0372
Junior	26	3.3692	.6967	.1366
Senior	9	3.2000	.6009	.2003
Grad/professional	2	3.5000	.7071	.5000
Other	1	2.8000	-	-

Analysis of Variance

Source	D.F.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Prob.
Between Groups	5	3.3486	.6697	2.1830	.0566
Within Groups	251	77.0019	.3068		

The ANOVA reported (D.F. between groups 5, within groups 251) no significance to determine increasing proficiency across academic rank in presentation #2 (.0566>.05).

Presentation #3

Group	N	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Freshmen	3	3.7333	.3055	.1764
Sophomore	84	3.5833	.5160	.0563
Junior	4	3.6000	.2309	.1155
Senior	-	-	-	-
Grad/professional	2	3.8000	.2828	.2000
Other	1	3.5936	.4938	.0509

Analysis of Variance

Source	D.F.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Prob.
Between Groups	4	.1528	.0382	.1510	.9621
Within Groups	89	22.5233	.2531		

No Seniors made Presentation #3

The ANOVA reported (D.F. between groups 4, within groups 89) no significance to determine increasing proficiency across academic rank in presentation #3 (.9621>.05).

DATA FOR SUBSIDIARY QUESTION #2

Is there a significant difference between the Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts Freshmen baseline competency level (prior to studying Communication Skills at the University), and the competency levels observed in subsequent course work across academic rank? (Data were analyzed as Freshmen vs Sophomore, Junior, Senior).

ANOVA tests determined that no two groups are significantly different at the .05 level. F probability is .2557 for presentation #1, .0566 for presentation #2, and .9621 for presentation #3. Each is greater than .05. **Therefore, there is no significance between the baseline Freshmen competency level and the competency levels across subsequent academic rank.**

DATA FOR SUBSIDIARY QUESTION #3

Is there a significant difference between the Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts Sophomore baseline competency level demonstrated in the Communication Skills course, (EN1030) and the Sophomore competency level demonstrated in concurrent and/or subsequent Arts & Sciences courses and Culinary Arts academic courses?

The scores for Communication Skills course (EN1030) were selected as the Sophomore population baseline competency. These scores were compared to the Sophomore population scores for presentations #2 and #3, in all courses other than EN1030. Note that the assessment data for all student presentations were entered chronologically. The results were as follows:

Presentation #1 Sophomore Population
EN1030 Baseline

N	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
90	3.56	.707	.075

Presentation #2 Sophomore Population
Courses Other Than EN1030

N	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
134	3.61	.562	.049

Presentation #3 Sophomore Population
Courses Other Than EN1030

N	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
63	3.654	.510	.064

The t Test for Comparison of a Sample Mean to a Population Mean was calculated, using the Sophomore Baseline EN1030 score as the population mean and presentation scores as the sample mean as follows:

$$T.S. = \frac{\text{sample mean} - 3.56}{\text{standard error}}$$

$$\frac{3.61 - 3.56}{.049} = 1.02 \qquad .5-.3461 = .154$$

The % of area lying between the mean and successive standard deviation units under the normal curve renders p value .154>.05. Therefore, there is no significance between the EN1030 Sophomore mean Baseline in Presentation #1 and the Sophomore mean score in Presentation #2 in all other courses.

$$T.S. = \frac{3.65 - 3.56}{.064 \qquad 1.40 \qquad .5 - .4192 \quad = \quad .08}$$

The % of area lying between the mean and successive standard deviation units under the normal curve renders p value .154>.05. Therefore, there is no significance between the EN1030 Sophomore mean Baseline in Presentation #1 and the Sophomore mean score in Presentation #3 in all other courses.

Atomistic Scores As A Measure of Student Competency

The Johnson & Wales University Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics measure five competencies through five levels of performance for each of those competencies. Thus far, the data have been presented as averages. While the holistic (average) score for each student performance is essential for assessment, so too are the component parts of each performance. It is through examination of these individual (atomistic) competencies and holistic competencies, that we can begin to answer the essential question: Are students learning what we are teaching? Further, by organizing the data as follows, it is possible to assess the five competencies across presentations. Since the rubrics enable us to rate and sum the parts, curricular refinement may be explicitly directed to appropriate competencies. It should also be noted that both holistic and atomistic data reveal curricular success.

Concern for Audience:

Presentation #1			Presentation #2			Presentation #3		
Score	Frequency	Valid %	Score	Frequency	Valid %	Score	Frequency	Valid %
1	0	0	1	1	.4	1	0	0
2	42	8.3	2	17	6.6	2	4	4.2
3	236	46.8	3	160	61.8	3	67	69.8
4	184	36.4	4	69	26.6	4	24	25.0
5	42	8.3	5	12	4.6	5	1	1.0
-	1	.2	-	246	-	-	409	-
Valid Population	504		Valid Population	259		Valid Population	96	

91.5% scored 3 or greater in presentation #1 {valid population 504 total population 505}

93% scored 3 or greater in presentation #2 {valid population 259 total population 260}

95.8% scored 3 or greater in presentation #3 {valid population 96 total population 96}

Organization and Structure:

Presentation #1			Presentation #2			Presentation #3		
Score	Frequency	Valid %	Score	Frequency	Valid %	Score	Frequency	Valid %
1	5	1.0	1	1	.4	1	0	0
2	44	8.7	2	18	6.9	2	6	6.3
3	166	32.9	3	52	20.1	3	20	20.8
4	246	48.8	4	175	67.6	4	68	70.8
5	43	8.5	5	13	5.0	5	2	2.1
-	1	.2.2	-	246	-	-	409	-
Valid Population	504		Valid Population	259		Valid Population	96	

90.2% scored 3 or greater in presentation #1 {valid population 504 total population 505}

92.7% scored 3 or greater in presentation #2 {valid population 259 total population 260}

93.7% scored 3 or greater in presentation #3 {valid population 96 total population 96}

Substance:

Presentation #1			Presentation #2			Presentation #3		
Score	Frequency	Valid %	Score	Frequency	Valid %	Score	Frequency	Valid %
1	8	1.6	1	1	.4	1	0	0
2	68	13.5	2	17	6.6	2	5	5.2
3	230	45.6	3	148	57.1	3	62	64.6
4	173	34.3	4	78	30.1	4	27	28.1
5	25	5.0	5	15	5.8	5	2	2.1
-	1	.2	-	246	-	-	409	-
Valid Population	504		Valid Population	259		Valid Population	96	

84.9% scored 3 or greater in presentation #1 {valid population 504 total population 505}

93% scored 3 or greater in presentation #2 {valid population 259 total population 260}

94.8% scored 3 or greater in presentation #3 {valid population 96 total population 96}

Voice/Articulation/Language:

Presentation #1			Presentation #2			Presentation #3		
Score	Frequency	Valid %	Score	Frequency	Valid %	Score	Frequency	Valid %
1	12	2.4	1	2	.8	1	0	0
2	42	8.3	2	15	5.8	2	4	4.2
3	201	39.9	3	62	23.9	3	20	20.8
4	216	42.9	4	168	64.9	4	61	63.5
5	33	6.5	5	12	4.6	5	11	11.5
-	1	.2	-	246	-	-	409	-
Valid Population	504		Valid Population	259		Valid Population	96	

89.3% scored 3 or greater in presentation #1 {valid population 504 total population 505}

93.4% scored 3 or greater in presentation #2 {valid population 259 total population 260}

95.8% scored 3 or greater in presentation #3 {valid population 96 total population 96}

Delivery/Non-Verbals:

Presentation #1			**Presentation #2**			**Presentation #3**		
Score	Frequency	Valid %	Score	Frequency	Valid %	Score	Frequency	Valid %
1	6	1.2	1	1	.4	1	0	0
2	48	9.5	2	10	3.9	2	4	4.3
3	205	40.7	3	72	28.0	3	25	26.6
4	189	37.5	4	116	45.1	4	37	39.4
5	56	11.1	5	58	22.6	5	28	29.8
-	1	.2	-	248	-	-	411	-
Valid Population	504		Valid Population	257		Valid Population	94	

89.3 % scored 3 or greater in presentation #1 {valid population 504 total population 505}

95.7% scored 3 or greater in presentation #2 {valid population 257 total population 260}

95.8% scored 3 or greater in presentation #3 {valid population 96 total population 96}

Atomistic Scores

% of population Scoring 3+ Per Presentation

Group	Concern For Audience	Organization Structure	Substance	Voice Articulation Language	Delivery Non Verbals
% Scoring 3+ Presentation #1 Population 505	91.5%	90.2%	84.9%	89.3%	89.3%
% Scoring 3+ Presentation #2 Population 260	93%	92.7%	93%	93.4%	95.7%
% Scoring 3+ Presentation #3 population 96	95.8%	93.7%	94.8%	95.8%	95.8%

EVALUATION

The atomistic score for the entire population, in every presentation, for every competency, increased through multiple presentations. However, there was a disproportionate number of students delivering multiple presentations.

The scores for the small number of students who delivered three cross curricular presentations, (N 96) increased as follows from presentation #1 to presentation #3:

Concern for Audience:	increase of 4.7%
Organization/Structure:	increase of 3.9%
Substance:	increase of 11.6%
Voice/Articulation/Language:	increase of 7.3%
Delivery/Non Verbals:	increase of 7.3%

Sophomore Slump Theory

In *A Longitudinal Study of College Student's Communication Competence*, Rubin et al. (1990 p. 12) reported that communication competence scores decreased in the Sophomore year, which may be natural due to the difficulties historically associated with the Sophomore year. They further noted that Freedman (1956) coined the phrase "sophomore slump." Feldman & Newcomb (1969) contended that sophomores are the most dissatisfied with their life, are characteristically confused and uncertain (Furr & Gunnaway, 1982), because of an identity crisis which encompasses sophomore's social as well as academic life (Margolis, 1976). 'Sophomore slump is more than just a cliché used to describe students' personal problems. Sophomore slump occurs during a trying developmental period' (Lemons and Richmond, 1987).

The Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts students who indicated, through the Student Demographic Survey, that they intended to stay on at Johnson & Wales University to earn a Bachelor's Degree, are considered, when testing the Sophomore Slump Theory in this study, to be "traditional" college students. That is, they are currently enrolled in year two of a four year program. It should be noted that the students actually earn both an Associates Degree and a Bachelor's Degree.

In order to test the Sophomore Slump Theory, this population was cross referenced with the two year students not planning to continue their education at Johnson & Wales University. The response data may be flawed in that the Student Demographic Survey asks if the students plan to earn a Bachelor's Degree "at Johnson & Wales University." It is likely that some students do plan to continue their education elsewhere. Nevertheless, the data were analyzed to determine if "traditional" Sophomores, who historically slump in the second of their four year college experience, did indeed score lower than those Sophomores planning to graduate in several months. The results were as follows:

Presentation #1

*Group Key: Yes = planning to earn a Bachelor's Degree at Johnson & Wales University
No = not planning to earn a Bachelor's Degree at Johnson & Wales University

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	Significance
Yes	140	3.48	.6379	2.2363	.1359
No	138	3.36	.6890		

SPSS calculated .1359 significance which is >.05. Therefore, in presentation #1, there is no significance between Sophomores planning to earn a four year degree at Johnson & Wales University and those not planning to do so.

Presentation #2

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	Significance
Yes	107	3.64	.5200	1.449	.2859
No	91	3.56	.5296		

SPSS calculated .2859 significance which is > .05. Therefore, in presentation #2, there is no significance between Sophomores planning to earn a four year degree at Johnson & Wales University and those not planning to do so.

Presentation #3

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	Significance
Yes	49	3.51	.5521	1.8842	.1736
No	35	3.67	.4527		

SPSS calculated .1736 significance which is > than .05. Therefore, in presentation #3, there is no significance between Sophomores planning to earn a four year degree at Johnson & Wales University and those not planning to do so.

CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

As we approach the new millennium, it is critical that institutions of higher education openly, and systematically assess the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Recognizing and embracing that challenge, Johnson & Wales University continues to build a comprehensive assessment initiative at the course, program, school/college, and university levels. A world leader in Career Education and the Culinary Arts, Johnson & Wales University also integrates a comprehensive General Education curriculum within each program of study. Traditionally, students attending "career education" institutions such as Johnson & Wales University, demand application and integration of skills, knowledge, and abilities to authentic circumstances. In this respect, the Oral Communication Competencies Assessment Project was ideal. Its goal was to determine student communication competency across the curriculum, transferring the skills taught in the Communication Skills class to authentic classroom performances.

Most valued by society as a foundation skill for college graduates and competent workers, communication prowess is extraordinarily complex to assess. This is exacerbated by the notion that if we can speak, we can automatically communicate effectively. It is essential then, to identify the competencies inherent to effective communication and descriptions of performance levels. The Oral Communication Mastery Document and Rubrics were designed to be used by faculty from any discipline, novice or expert in assessment. As supported by the work of Carlson and Smith-Howell (1995), this assessment project subscribes to the premise that, when given specific criteria, relatively untrained evaluators can reliably and validly assess public speeches as long as the forms

address content and delivery. In fact, the instruments in this study were welcomed by faculty, lauded for their clarity and conciseness, and rendered solid intercoder reliability.

Since it is likely that any number of factors may influence communication skills (peers, teachers, family, environment, self image, past experiences, etc.), it is difficult to credit one particular course or program as the sole teacher of communication skills. It was not the intention of this study to do so. Rather, the process of developing communication prowess is believed to be cumulative; skills learned and practiced in the EN1030 Speech Communication course are transferred to a variety of authentic circumstances and ultimately mastered over time.

RQ: As demonstrated through the delivery of oral presentations in Arts & Sciences and Culinary Arts Academic courses which require oral presentations, do Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts Sophomore, Junior and Senior students and Pastry Arts Sophomores demonstrate oral communication competencies at an adequate* level?

*(3 on the 1-5 scale)

The scoring is determined through the Johnson & Wales University Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics.

FINDINGS

Demographic Summary: Most Frequently Occurring Statistics

The most frequently described student in the Oral Communication Competencies Assessment Project was a 19-20 year old male Sophomore, majoring in Culinary Arts. He was graduated from high school prior to entering the University, and plans to earn a Bachelor's Degree at Johnson & Wales University. He commutes to school (50.3% commute vs 49.7 % live on campus, 6 missing cases-not conclusive), and works outside of school an average of 11-20 hours per week. He spends 6-10 hours per week on school work outside of class.

The entire population of students (505) in the pilot assessment project delivered presentation #1, the basis for the hypothesis. A total of 260 students delivered both presentations #1 and #2, while 96 students delivered presentations #1, #2, and #3. No Senior population was reported for presentation #3. All presentations were scored using the Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics. The following results were reported:

FOR SOPHOMORE, JUNIOR, AND SENIOR STUDENTS:
DATA TO REJECT THE NULL HYPOTHESIS.

H*o*: As demonstrated through the delivery of oral presentations in Arts & Sciences and Culinary Arts Academic courses which require oral presentations, Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts **Sophomore, Junior and Senior** students and Pastry Arts **Sophomores** do not demonstrate oral communication competencies at an adequate* level.
*(3 on the Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics)

Based on the student scores in Presentation #1, and using a score of 3 as the absolute standard, the H*o* was rejected for the Sophomore population (284 students) by p value < .001, for the Junior population (61 students) by p value .0025<.05, and for the Senior population (32 students) by p value .0119<.05.

Ancillary data to reject the H*o* were gathered from presentation #2 and Presentation #3 and rendered the following: The H*o* was rejected for the Sophomore population (202 students) by p value <.001, and for the Junior population (26 students) by p value .0035<.05. The Senior population (9 students) mean score of 3.2889 has no significance against the mean absolute standard score of 3.

In Presentation #3, the H*o* was rejected for the Sophomore population (84 students), and for the Junior population (4 students) by p value <..001. There was no Senior population in Presentation #3.

DATA FOR SUBSIDIARY QUESTION #1

Do Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts Sophomores,* and Culinary Arts Juniors and Seniors demonstrate oral communication competencies at increasing proficiency in concurrent and/or subsequent course work across academic rank?

*(concurrently studying Communication Skills)

Based on the scores in Presentation #1, the ANOVA reported (D.F. between groups 5, within groups 497) no significance to determine increasing proficiency across academic rank (.2557>.05). In Presentation #2, the ANOVA reported (D.F. between groups 5, within groups 251) no significance to determine increasing proficiency across academic rank (.0566>.05). In Presentation #3, the ANOVA reported (D.F. between groups 4, within groups 89) no significance to determine increasing proficiency across academic rank (.9621>.05).

DATA FOR SUBSIDIARY QUESTION #2

Is there a significant difference between the Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts Freshmen baseline competency level (prior to studying Communication Skills at the University), and the competency levels observed in subsequent course work across academic rank?

ANOVA tests determined that no two groups are significantly different at the .05 level. F probability is .2557 for presentation #1, .0566 for presentation #2, and .9621 for presentation #3. Each is greater than .05. **Therefore, there is no significance between the baseline Freshmen competency level and the competency levels observed in subsequent course work across academic rank.**

(Data were analyzed as Freshmen vs Sophomore, Junior, Senior.)

DATA FOR SUBSIDIARY QUESTION #3

Is there a significant difference between the Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts Sophomore baseline competency level demonstrated in the Communication Skills course, (EN1030) and the Sophomore competency level demonstrated in concurrent and/or subsequent Arts & Sciences courses and Culinary Arts academic courses?

The scores for Communication Skills course (EN1030) were selected as the Sophomore population baseline competency. These scores were compared to the Sophomore population scores for presentations #2 and #3, in all courses other than EN1030. Note that the assessment data for all student presentations were entered chronologically. The results were as follows:

There is no significance between the EN1030 Sophomore mean Baseline in Presentation #1 and the Sophomore mean score in Presentation #2 in all other courses, as determined through p value .154>.05.

There is no significance between the EN1030 Sophomore mean Baseline in Presentation #1 and the Sophomore mean score in Presentation #3 in all other courses, as determined through p value .154>.05.

Atomistic Scores As A Measure of Student Competency

The EN1030 course mastery objectives include the five competencies represented on the Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics: Concern for Audience; Organization/Structure; Substance; Voice/Articulation/Language; and Delivery/Non Verbals. It is therefore logical to assess student performance of these competencies, since it is expected that students will

transfer competencies in these areas across the curriculum. Since the rubrics enable us to rate and sum the parts, holistic and atomistic competencies are revealed to direct curricular refinement toward appropriate competencies, and to suggest curricular success. The previous data have been representative of holistic means. The following data are revealed about atomistic competencies:

While the population is disproportionate throughout the three presentations (505, 260, 96), the students who delivered multiple presentations did demonstrate increased competencies in the five mastery areas. The scores for the small number of students who delivered three cross curricular presentations, (N 96-no Seniors) increased as follows from presentation #1 to presentation #3:

Concern for Audience:	increase of 4.7%
Organization/Structure:	increase of 3.9%
Substance:	increase of 11.6%
Voice/Articulation/Language:	increase of 7.3%
Delivery/Non Verbals:	increase of 7.3%

Sophomore Slump Theory

Rubin et al. reported, in *A Longitudinal Study of College Student's Communication Competence* (1990), that communication competence scores decreased in the Sophomore year, which may be due to the difficulties historically associated with Sophomore year. For this study, the students who indicated on the Student Demographic Survey, that they intended to earn a Bachelor's Degree at Johnson & Wales University were considered "traditional" Sophomores; that is they are currently enrolled in year two

of a four year program. This population was cross referenced with the two year students not planning to continue their education at Johnson & Wales University. It is likely that the response data may be flawed because the survey question asked if students plan to earn a Bachelor's Degree at Johnson & Wales University. Some students may plan to continue their education elsewhere, yet answered "no" to the question, but will actually be "traditional" Sophomores at another institution. Nevertheless the data were analyzed with the following results:

The total Sophomore population in this study was 284. Of these, 140 indicated that they planned to earn a Bachelor's Degree at the University. Their mean score was 3.48 in presentation #1. The 138 students who indicated that they did not plan to earn a Bachelor's Degree at the University rendered a mean score of 3.36. SPSS calculated no significance (.1359>.05) in presentation #1 between the Sophomores planning to earn a four year degree at Johnson & Wales University and those not planning to do so .

In presentation #2, the "yes" group of 107 Sophomores rendered a 3.64 mean. The "no" group of 91 students rendered a 3.56 mean. SPSS calculated no significance (.2859>.05) between the Sophomores planning to earn a four year degree at the University and those not planning to do so.

Finally, in presentation #3, the "yes" group of 49 Sophomores rendered a 3.51 mean. The "no" group rendered a 3.67 mean. SPSS calculated no significance (.1736>.05) between the Sophomores planning to earn a four year degree at the University and those not planning to do so.

Therefore, the Sophomore Slump Theory can neither be proved, nor disproved with this population.

CONCLUSIONS

The H*o* is rejected in presentation #1, the only presentation delivered by the entire population in this study. Therefore, it is stated with confidence, that as demonstrated through the delivery of oral presentations in Arts & Sciences and Culinary Arts Academic courses which require oral presentations, Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts **Sophomore, Junior and Senior** students and Pastry Arts **Sophomores** demonstrate oral communication competencies at an adequate* level.

*(3 on the Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics)

Further research is most certainly warranted to assess student oral communication competencies in the University's other school and colleges, and throughout its various branch campuses. Such studies could replicate the methodologies employed in this project.

There was no significance between or within groups to determine if Johnson & Wales University Culinary and Pastry Arts Sophomores,* and Culinary Arts Juniors and Seniors demonstrate oral communication competencies at increasing proficiency in concurrent and/or subsequent course work across academic rank.

*(concurrently studying Communication Skills)

There was no significance between the Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts Freshmen baseline competency level (prior to studying Communication Skills at the University), and the competency levels observed in subsequent course work across academic rank.

There was no significance difference between the Johnson & Wales University Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts Sophomore baseline competency level demonstrated in the Communication Skills course, (EN1030) and the Sophomore competency level demonstrated in concurrent and/or subsequent Arts & Sciences courses and Culinary Arts academic courses.

Finally, there was no significance between the group of Sophomores planning to earn a Bachelor's Degree at the University and those not planning to do so. If the major study is replicated, so too should the subsidiary questions be revisited in subsequent studies. This assessment model has import in terms of the linkage between and among courses; the transferable skills of General Education. The major findings will be used in accreditation reports and will be shared with the University's many constituencies.

The assessment model can also replicated at universities and colleges with similar programs and cross curricular outcomes. The Oral Communication Mastery Document and Oral Communication Competencies Rubrics are now included in many course outlines as a means of communicating, to students, the University's standards of excellence. Many students plan their presentations, using the rubrics as a guide. In this respect the assessment process has been especially successful. Further, the rubrics have been welcomed by many faculty and administrators as an ideal instrument for assessing presentations in various disciplines.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based upon the findings and conclusions in this study, the following recommendations are made:

* There is a need for more cross curricular oral presentations, particularly at the Junior and Senior level. While the Junior and Senior population in the study was a representative sample of the total population, only 4 of the 34 course sections were Junior and Senior courses. The atomistic ratings suggested improvement in some skills through multiple presentations.

* It is recommended that an in-service program be presented to the University's faculty and administration on the study and how to replicate and expand it across all schools and colleges, as well as at the branch campuses Johnson & Wales University.

The assessment of oral communication competencies will therefore become a major institutional outcomes assessment project.

* In addition to assessing oral communication competencies throughout the schools/colleges at the main campus in Providence, it is recommended that cross curricular assessments also take place at the University's various branch campuses.

* Since effective assessment programs are labor and time intensive, the University's commitment to outcomes assessment must be supported in terms of "reassigned time" for faculty serving on school/college and/or University Outcomes Assessment Committees. These faculty should also be supported financially in their Professional Development efforts in terms of conferences and workshops as they directly relate to University's outcomes assessment initiative.

* It is recommended that the results of this study be communicated to our regional accreditation association (NEAS&C) as an example of Johnson & Wales University's institutional commitment to outcomes assessment.

* It is recommended that in subsequent studies, all students receive immediate feedback in terms of the rubrics, which clearly articulate the competencies necessary for mastery.

* The findings of this study should be used to improve the teaching/learning process in Communication courses at Johnson & Wales University.

* While the logistics are often difficult to overcome, longitudinal studies of student competencies may also be conducted, using the Oral Communication Competencies Assessment Model.

* Finally, it is critical that Johnson & Wales University continues to pilot assessment projects such as the Oral Communication Competencies Project. It is through comprehensive, authentic performance assessment such as this, that we clearly articulate and measure our outcomes so that teaching and learning may be re-defined and refined.

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Appendix

Student Demographic Survey

Last Name

First Name

PLEASE USE PENCIL

RIGHT WRONG

If you must erase, please erase completely!

Student ID Number

Age
- 17-18
- 19-20
- 21-22
- 23-24
- 25+

Sex
- Male
- Female

What is the highest level of education you attained prior to entering Johnson & Wales?
- High School graduate
- Some courses at the college level
- 2 year college degree from another college or university
- 4 year college degree from another college or university
- Technical school graduate

Current status at Johnson & Wales
- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior
- Graduate/Professional
- Other_____

If you are currently a Freshman or Sophomore, do you plan to earn a Bachelor Degree at Johnson & Wales?
- Yes
- No

If you are currently a Junior or Senior, do you plan to earn a Graduate Degree at Johnson & Wales?
- Yes
- No

What is your major?
- Culinary Arts
- Pastry Arts
- Business
- Hospitality
- Technology
- Graduate School

Do you:
- Commute to school
- Live on campus

Do you work during the school year?
- Yes
- No

If you do work during the school year, how many hours per week do you work?
- 1-10
- 11-20
- 21-30
- 30-40
- more than 40

How many hours per week do you spend on school work outside of class, including presentations, studying, & research?
- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

APPENDIX #2 TRAINING TAPE #1 INTERCODER RELIABILITY

	X	X^2	X	X^2	X	X^2	X	X^2	X	X^2	SUM X	SUM X^2
1	3	9	3	9	4	16	2	4	3	9	15	225
2	3	9	3	9	4	16	3	9	4	16	17	289
3	4	16	4	16	4	16	3	9	4	16	19	361
4	4	16	5	25	4	16	3	9	4	16	20	400
5	4	16	4	16	4	16	3	9	4	16	19	361
6	4	16	5	25	4	16	3	9	4	16	20	400
7	4	16	4	16	4	16	3	9	4	16	19	361
8	4	16	5	25	4	16	3	9	4	16	20	400
9	4	16	5	25	5	25	3	9	4	16	21	441
10	4	16	4	16	4	16	4	16	4	16	20	400
11	3	9	4	16	4	16	4	16	4	16	19	361
12	3	9	4	16	3	9	3	9	3	9	16	256
13	3	9	4	16	3	9	4	16	3	9	17	289
14	3	9	3	9	3	9	3	9	3	9	15	225
15	4	16	4	16	4	16	4	16	5	25	21	441
16	3	9	4	16	3	9	3	9	2	4	15	225
17	4	16	4	16	4	16	3	9	2	4	17	289
SUM	61	223	69	287	65	253	54	176	61	229	310	5724

I^2 = .25735 I^2 = .43382 I^2 = .27941 I^2 = .27941 I^2 = .63235

S^2 = 4.4412

SUM I^2 = 1.88235 X = 72%

APPENDIX #3 TRAINING TAPE #2 INTERCODER RELIABILITY

	X	X^2	X	X^2	X	X^2	X	X^2	X	X^2	SUM X	SUM X^2
1	4	16	4	16	4	16	5	25	5	25	22	484
2	4	16	4	16	4	16	4	16	5	25	21	441
3	4	16	4	16	4	16	4	16	4	16	20	400
4	4	16	4	16	4	16	4	16	4	16	20	400
5	4	16	4	16	4	16	4	16	4	16	20	400
6	4	16	5	25	4	16	4	16	4	16	21	441
7	4	16	4	16	4	16	4	16	4	16	20	400
8	4	16	4	16	5	25	5	25	4	16	22	484
9	4	16	5	25	4	16	4	16	4	16	21	441
10	4	16	4	16	4	16	4	16	4	16	20	400
11	3	9	4	16	3	9	4	16	4	16	18	324
12	3	9	4	16	4	16	3	9	4	16	18	324
13	3	9	3	9	3	9	3	9	3	9	15	225
14	3	9	3	9	3	9	3	9	3	9	15	225
15	3	9	3	9	3	9	3	9	3	9	15	225
16	3	9	4	16	4	16	4	16	4	16	19	361
17	3	9	4	16	4	16	4	16	4	16	19	361
SUM	61	223	67	269	65	253	66	262	67	269	326	6336

I^2 = .25735 I^2 = .30882 I^2 = .27941 I^2 = .36029 I^2 = .30882

S^2 = 5.2794

SUM I^2 = 1.51471 X = 89%

TO: Instructors of Culinary Arts, Pastry Arts, AND Arts & Sciences
FROM: Joanne M. Crossman
DATE: September 5, 1995
RE: Outcomes Assessment

The College of Culinary Arts and the School of Arts & Sciences are working together during the first term this year, to asses our students' Oral Communication Competencies. **This initiative is strongly supported by Dean McVety and Dean Farrell** as we continue to integrate Career Education and General Education.

Please complete the form below and **return it to Joanne M. Crossman's mailbox** by **FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 8.** The assessment process will help us to determine if our students are transferring the Communication Skills taught in the EN1030 class to their concurrent and subsequent classes.

It is vital that you provide the following information and return it by September 8. Thank you!

****INSTRUCTOR'S NAME:** _____

PLEASE LIST ALL DAY SCHOOL COURSES BEING TAUGHT FIRST TERM 1995, IN WHICH YOU REQUIRE STUDENTS TO MAKE ORAL PRESENTATIONS:

COURSE NAME & NUMBER	SECTION	APPROX. # OF STUDENTS	STUDENTS' ACADEMIC YEAR (COURSE LEVEL)
Example: Communication Skills EN1030	XYZ	32	Sophomore

TO: Culinary Arts and Arts & Sciences Faculty Participating in the Oral Communications Assessment Project
FROM: Joanne M. Crossman
DATE: September 10, 1995
RE: Scoring Sample Speeches for Intercoder Reliability

Thank you for responding to my previous memo, by listing the classes in which you require oral presentations. The next part of the process as also very important.

1) **Please read the enclosed form entitled "Oral Communications Mastery Document."** This form is a detailed explanation of the Oral Assessment criteria.

2) **Please read the shorter form entitled "Holistic Rubrics For Oral Competencies."** You will note that this is an abbreviated version of the first form, and is a score sheet. This rubrics describes the competencies for mastery and the levels of mastery for those competencies.

3) **Please view the attached video tape.** It contains **two brief speeches** presented by typical college students. Theses are not Johnson & Wales students. **As you view the speeches, please score them separately on the Holistic Rubrics. Please put your name on both Holistic Rubrics and indicate the titles of the speeches as well.**

You will note that neither speech has visual aids...please do not downgrade in this area. Apparently the instructors did not require visuals.

4) **Please return the video tape and the two completed Holistic Rubrics** with your name and the title of the presentations on both, to Joanne M. Crossman's mailbox **by next week.** The entire process will not take much time...please do not delay...the tapes must be circulated among several faculty.

5) The purpose of this process is to assure **intercoder reliability.** That is, we must be certain that we are scoring the presentations in a like manner. Please let me know if I may be of help. Also, a word of inspiration...at the end of the term, I will write to each Dean with a cc: to you, to document that you have been an integral link in the assessment process. Thank you again.

TO: Instructors participating in the Oral Communications Assessment
FROM: Joanne M. Crossman
DATE: September 25, 1995
RE: Student demographic survey

The next step in our assessment process is VITAL. We need to discover student variables by conducting a student demographic survey. You will find a packet of Scantron style surveys enclosed with this memo.

1) Please conduct this survey **immediately** and return it to Joanne M. Crossman's mailbox-
PLEASE ATTACH A NOTE WITH YOUR NAME AND THE COURSE NUMBER AND SECTION.

2) Students must use **NUMBER TWO PENCIL ONLY.**

3) There will be some repetition some students will have completed the survey in other academic courses--they should only complete one survey. However, it is **CRUCIAL THAT WE ATTAIN A SURVEY FROM EVERY STUDENT IN THE CLASSES IN WHICH YOU REQUIRE ORAL PRESENTATIONS.**

4) Please follow up with those students who were absent when you administered the survey.

5) **Please do not delay...**this study is strongly supported by Dean McVety and Dean Farrell and is vital to our assessment initiative.

6) Student I.D. number is their social security number.

TO: Instructors participating in the Oral Communications Assessment Project
FROM: Joanne M. Crossman
DATE: October 1, 1995
RE: Your final step in the assessment process

PLEASE FOLLOW THESE DIRECTIONS FOR THE FINAL PHASE OF THE ORAL COMMUNICATIONS ASSESSMENT:

1. When your students make the presentation you have planned to assess, PLEASE SCORE EACH PRESENTATION ON THE ENCLOSED HOLISTIC FORMS.

2. At the TOP OF EACH FORM PLEASE PRINT THE STUDENT'S NAME, DATE, COURSE NUMBER AND SECTION. THIS IS CRITICAL TO THE STUDY.

3. RATE EACH STUDENT'S PERFORMANCE BY CIRCLING THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER IN EACH CATEGORY.

4. You may wish to consult the longer form of the rubrics (enclosed) for a more detailed description of each category.

5. PLEASE ENCLOSE IN EACH OF YOUR FOLDERS, A PHOTOCOPY OF YOUR ROSTER--I NEED EACH STUDENT'S IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER).

6. PLEASE COMPLETE THE ASSESSMENT WHILE EACH STUDENT IS SPEAKING, OR IMMEDIATELY AFTER. DO NOT "PUT IT OFF," AS THIS WILL ALTER YOUR SCORES.

7. PLEASE RETURN EACH CLASS' ASSESSMENTS AND PHOTOCOPIED ROSTER TO JOANNE M. CROSSMAN'S MAIL BOX. PLEASE WAIT UNTIL THE ENTIRE CLASS HAS BEEN ASSESSED BEFORE TURNING IN THE FOLDER (ie, not a few at a time).

Thank you for your assistance. Please see me if I may be of any help.

TO: Tom Farrell and Paul McVety
FROM: Joanne M. Crossman
DATE: November 18, 1995
RE: Faculty Participating in the Oral Communications Assessment of Culinary and Pastry Arts Students

The following faculty members participated in the Oral Communications Assessment of Culinary and Pastry Arts students during the first term of the 1995-96 academic year.

Their participation included a training program designed to assure inter-coder reliability, a student demographic survey, and scoring of individual student presentations using our Communications Rubrics.

I am currently entering and interpreting the data from more than 500 students, enrolled in 36 sections of Arts & Sciences and Culinary Arts Academic courses. Many of these students made presentations in multiple courses, which will of course, aid in our assessment of the Transferable Skills of General Education. I will provide a detailed report to you upon completion.

Mary Barszcz (Arts & Sciences)
Ilene Cassola (Arts & Sciences)
Joanne M. Crossman (Arts & Sciences)
Gail Doyle (Arts & Sciences)
Paula Figoni (Culinary Arts)
Nancy Garnette-Thomas (Culinary Arts)
Nelson Guertin (Arts & Sciences)
Michael Marra (Culinary Arts)
Deb Marshall-Ridolfi (Arts & Sciences)
David Newman (Arts & Sciences)
Tom Pandolfini (Arts & Sciences)
Sam Postbrief (Arts & Sciences)
Jim Prest (Arts & Sciences)
Chris Thompson (Arts & Sciences)
Silvin Vaicaitis (Arts & Sciences)
Suzanne Vieira (Culinary Arts)
Paula Zuege (Arts & Sciences)

INDIVIDUAL MEMOS WERE SENT TO EACH FACULTY PARTICIPANT TO THANK THEM FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE ASSESSMENT PROJECT.

TO: (Each Faculty Member)
FROM: Joanne M. Crossman
DATE: November 18, 1995
RE: Participation in the Oral Communication Competencies Assessment Project

Thank you for participating in the Oral Communication Competencies Assessment of Culinary Arts and Pastry Arts students, during the first term of the 1995-96 academic year. As you are aware, this Outcomes Assessment initiative is an essential component of our efforts to assess the Transferable Skills of General Education.

Your willingness to train for intercoder reliability, conduct student demographic surveys, and score student presentations with the Oral Communications Competencies Rubrics, has yielded data for an extensive study. As I continue to enter and interpret the data, I am happy to report that you are one of seventeen faculty at the Harborside Campus, who required oral presentation in day school classes this term. This practice of engendering communication prowess is encouraging.

Thank you for your interest in the John Hazen White School of Arts & Sciences Outcomes Assessment initiative. I will certainly report our findings to you when they become available. Please feel free to use this letter for documentation purposes, should you desire to do so. I have forwarded a list of faculty participants to Dean Farrell and Dean McVety.